CITY HILIGHTS

THURSDAY ▸ MAY 21, 2026 ▸ VOL: 11 ▸ ISSUE: 306 ▸ PAGES 12 ▸ ₹2.00

The Truth Speaks

www.ibcworldnews.com cityhilights.news@gmail.com

Kumble backs Sooryavanshi to break Gayle's IPL six-hitting record P12

IBC WORLD NEWS

CH ABC Certified English Daily

BENGALURU ▸ HUBBALLI ▸ MANGALURU ▸ MYSURU ▸ KALABURAGI

Modi-Meloni draw new geopolitical map

Not 'Indo-Pacific' anymore, it's 'Indo-Mediterranean': India-Italy are no longer just trade partners, but are now pitching an entire 'Indo-Mediterranean' alliance, amind changing global geopolitical order

ROME

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni have outlined an expansive vision for stronger India-Italy ties, describing the relationship as a "special strategic partnership" that could play a major role in shaping the future global order.

In a joint op-ed titled "Italy and India: A Strategic Partnership for the Indo-Mediterranean," the two leaders presented a roadmap focused on trade, technology, defence, clean energy and strategic connectivity between Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Why the India-Italy collab matters

As per the two leaders, the bilateral ties have entered a "decisive stage," evolving from a cordial friendship into a partnership rooted in "the values of freedom and democracy, and a common vision for the future." They argued that the global geopolitical landscape is rapidly changing and that the Indo-Pacific and Mediterranean regions are becoming increasingly interconnected. They described this evolving space as the "Indo-Mediterranean" corridor, which they see as a major hub for trade, energy, technology, data flows and strategic cooperation.

Focus on trade and industrial cooperation

Modi and Meloni set a target of crossing EUR 20 billion in bilateral trade by 2029. The sectors identified for growth include defence, aerospace, clean energy, machinery, pharmaceuticals, textiles and tourism.

What this means globally?

The joint op-ed suggests India and Italy want to position themselves as key partners in an increasingly interconnected geopolitical landscape linking the Indo-Pacific, Europe and the Mediterranean. The emphasis on trade, technology, ethical AI, energy transition and infrastructure connectivity indicates that both countries see their relationship as extending beyond bilateral interests into broader global strategic cooperation.

Technology and AI emerge as key pillars

The two leaders stressed that technological development must remain ethical and centred around human values.

Strategic alignment on security and global challenges

India-Italy pledged stronger co-op against terrorism, cybercrime, drug and human trafficking. Also bats for greater Asia-Middle East-Europe connectivity.

Modi-Meloni strategic vision connects:

- India
- Middle East
- Mediterranean
- Europe

THE GOAL?

A new economic-geopolitical corridor built around:

- Trade
- Energy
- AI
- Manufacturing
- Digital infrastructure
- Supply chains

At the center of it all is IMEC (the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor).

This comes amid:

- Rising US-Irantensions
- Ongoing Red Sea disruptions
- Europe looks for new strategic allies
- India becoming central to global manufacturing and logistics

When Europe tries to reduce dependence on unstable global supply chains, India positions itself as the bridge between East and West.

Energy transition and sustainability goals

PM Modi and Meloni highlighted cooperation in renewable energy, green hydrogen, smart grids and sustainable infrastructure projects.

Civilisational and cultural connections

The leaders also felt India's concepts of "Dharma" and "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" share common ground with Italy's Renaissance-era humanist traditions.

No more open jeep safaris in Karnataka tiger reserves

BENGALURU

Karnataka Forest, Ecology, and Environment Minister Eshwar B Khandre on Wednesday directed authorities to replace open camper vehicles with safer buses for safaris across the state's five tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries.

Following the incident at Dubare elephant camp in Kodagu district on May 18, where a tourist woman died during a clash between two trained elephants, the Minister has issued clear instructions to the Chief Wildlife Warden to give higher priority to tourists safety in safaris.

As per officials, safaris are conducted in various tiger reserves and wildlife sanctuaries across the state, including Bandipur Tiger Reserve, Nagarahole Tiger Reserve, Kali, Biligirirangana Hills, and Bhadra Tiger Reserve, as well as forest areas such as Malai Mahadeshwara Hills, Dandeli, and K Gudi.

These locations attract tourists and wildlife enthusiasts not only from different parts of the state but also from across the country and abroad.

In a statement shared by the minister's office, Khandre noted that, fortunately, there have been no incidents so far in safari areas where wild animals such as elephants or tigers have attacked safari vehicles causing fatalities.However, he emphasised the need to take precautionary measures before any such unfortunate incidents occur.

For the safety of tourists, Khandre has directed that open camper vehicles used in safaris should be replaced with fully secured buses. Existing campers should be fitted with iron grill protections or shatterproof glass and then used. He also instructed that tourists must not be allowed to step out inside forest areas. Additionally, each safari vehicle must be equipped with a first-aid kit, and ambulance services should be ensured near safari centers and elephant camps.

SC extends deadline for GBA polls till Aug 31

NEW DELHI

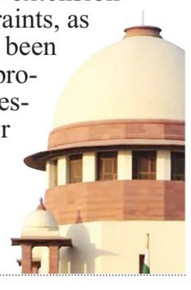
The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted the Karnataka government and the State Election Commission (SEC) time until August 31 as the final opportunity to conclude elections in five city corporations in Bengaluru.

During hearing by a bench comprising CJI Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi, senior advocate AM Singhvi, representing the Karnataka government, contended that there was difficulty arranging state government staff due to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise.

After hearing Singhvi's submissions, the bench extended the previous deadline from June 30 to August 31, 2026.

The state and the SEC had filed pleas to grant three months' additional time for the purpose. It was contended that state staff would be busy conducting the census, special intensive revision of electoral rolls, Class X and XII board examinations, etc.

The state and the SEC also sought modification of the court's January 12 order, which directed that the polls be completed by June 30. The state, in its plea, contended that it is not seeking this extension due to any financial constraints, as ample funds have already been allocated for the electoral process. The extension is necessitated by manpower crunch as the entire administrative and field-level machinery is deployed for census and SIR.



Adhikari hands over land to BSF for border fencing

KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday handed over land to the BSF for international boundary fencing and security infrastructure, beginning with a 27 km stretch, and said more land would be provided wherever required to to strengthen border management in the state.

Addressing a BSF land transfer meeting, Adhikari said the process marked the beginning of a larger initiative to improve border security in the state.

Initially, land covering a 27 km stretch along the India-Bangladesh international boundary will be handed over to the BSF in two weeks ," he said.

Highlighting the need to expedite border infrastructure, the Chief Minister said a sizeable portion of West Bengal's international boundary still remained unfenced.

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
GUARANTEE HABBA
Stepping into the 4th year
Shakthi
Free bus service for women across Karnataka
For the past three years, the Guarantee Sarkara has empowered women by enabling free travel across the state, fostering greater mobility, independence, and socio-economic progress
₹18,943 Crore
utilized so far under the Shakthi Scheme, empowering women through free travel and self-reliance
Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
726 Crore
free tickets distributed, enabling women across Karnataka to travel independently
D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
ವಾಕರಸಾಸಂ ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ
ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಘಟಕ 01
No: 0005002 14/05/26 20:23:26
EXPRESS KA25F3020
ಮಹಿಳೆಯರ ಉಚಿತ ಟಿಕೇಟ
0 -- ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
HUBLI N/S to BANGALORE
(TOLL: 73.00 ARF: 2.00)
FULL : 1 * 565.00 = ₹. 565.00
ಮೊತ್ತ: ರೂ. = 0.00
835680 A11435 D07298 11028658 102
Anna Bhagya
Gruha Jyothi
Gruha Lakshmi
Yuva Nidhi
Scan the QR Code to Witness the Impact of Shakthi
Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Siddaramaiah and Hon'ble Minister Shri Ramalinga Reddy distributing free bus tickets to women under the Shakthi scheme
CMofKarnataka https://dipr.karnataka.gov.in/
"To protect and respect our vibrant culture and tradition," is a Fundamental Duty of every citizen. This is affirmed by our Constitution.
karnataka information

QUICK READ

Admission panel warns medical colleges against excess fee

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
The Admission Overseeing Committee (AOC), headed by retired Justice Ramachandra D Huddar, has warned private medical colleges in Karnataka against collecting unauthorised fees from students during undergraduate and postgraduate admissions. The committee said it had received complaints that some colleges were demanding university fees directly from students even though the Karnataka Examinations Authority had already remitted the amount to Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences during seat allotment. The AOC also flagged complaints regarding collection of caution deposits and other fees not permitted under agreements between the state government and private colleges. Institutions are allowed to collect only Rs 30,000 as skill lab fee and Rs 15,000 as miscellaneous fee.

Engineer, contractor trapped by Lokayukta in bribery case

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Lokayukta police have arrested a Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Assistant Executive Engineer and an electrical contractor for allegedly accepting a Rs 50,000 bribe to sanction additional power supply to a temporary meter in west Bengaluru. The accused engineer, identified as B Manojkumar, was attached to BESCOM's South Division. His associate, contractor Kantharaju, was also arrested during the operation. According to a Lokayukta press note, the engineer allegedly demanded the bribe for sanctioning an additional 25kW power connection to a building in Hegganahalli.

BMTC driver assaulted for not giving way; one accused arrested

CH NEWS, BENGALURU
Hulimavu police have arrested a man for allegedly attacking a Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation bus driver after a dispute over giving way on Bannerghatta Road. The arrested accused has been identified as Abdul Shoaib (26), a resident of Weavers' Colony. Police said two other accused are absconding and efforts are underway to trace them. The victim, Vijay Kumar, is a driver attached to BMTC's 4th depot. According to police, the three accused, travelling on a bike, attempted to overtake the bus near Gottigere. When unable to move ahead, they allegedly blocked the bus and assaulted the driver. The incident was captured on the bus camera. Police said the accused worked as bike mechanics.

Kumaraswamy warns inactive district presidents

JDS leader urges district units to strengthen organisation through committed grassroots public engagement

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy issued a stern warning to inactive district presidents within the Janata Dal (Secular), stating that the party no longer needed leaders who only carried letterheads and visiting cards without contributing actively to organisational work.

Addressing a meeting of district presidents at the party's state office, JP Bhavan, Kumaraswamy emphasised that loyalty, commitment and grassroots work would determine future leadership opportunities within the party.

"I do not need district presidents with letterheads or visiting cards. I need people who actively work for the party with loyalty," Kumaraswamy said. "Only such people will be given opportunities in the coming days."

The senior JDS leader also made attendance at core committee meetings mandatory and warned that members repeatedly remaining absent would be replaced.

"All members should compulsorily attend core committee meetings. If anyone remains absent for two or three meetings, they will be replaced and another person will be appointed," he said.

Kumaraswamy stressed that party positions should not be treated as decorative posts and said leaders unwilling to work should step aside and allow committed workers to take responsibility.

"The responsibility of district presidents or core committee members is not for decoration.

Those who are present should do their work properly. If you cannot do it, give an opportunity to those who can," he remarked sharply.

He noted that while grassroots workers were performing effectively in several regions, the behaviour and inactivity of some leaders were causing organisational setbacks for the party.

Sending a strong message on discipline and loyalty, Kumaraswamy reminded party leaders that positions were temporary responsibilities rather than permanent entitlements.

"Any post you get is not permanent. It is only an opportunity to work for the party. Everyone should devote at least one hour daily for party activities," he said.

The Union Minister also criticised the Karnataka government, alleging that it was focusing more on publicity than governance despite implementing guarantee schemes.

"Farmers, agricultural labourers and daily wage workers are facing serious problems in the state.

This government is not doing any meaningful work and is surviving on publicity," he alleged. Kumaraswamy instructed district leaders to intensify struggles at gram panchayat, taluk and district levels by taking up public issues and exposing the government's failures among people. He further underlined the importance of maintaining close public contact and said aspiring leaders must actively participate in people's movements if they wished to become elected representatives in the future. The meeting was attended by several senior JDS leaders, including Nikhil Kumaraswamy, legislators, former ministers and district presidents from across Karnataka.

Drain work to tackle Manyata flooding 60% complete

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

After repeated interventions by the Bengaluru North City Corporation, storm water drain work aimed at permanently resolving the chronic flooding problem at Manyata Tech Park has reached around 60 percent completion, officials said.

Flooding inside the sprawling tech park and along the busy Outer Ring Road stretch outside has become a recurring issue during heavy rains over the past few years. Waterlogging has frequently disrupted traffic movement and affected employees working in the technology hub. Even on Monday, parts of the campus witnessed flooding following rainfall.

Officials said the primary reason for the flooding was the obstruction of the natural flow of rainwater caused by a compound wall constructed within the area, which prevented excess rainwater from entering the storm water drain network.

To address the issue, civic authorities directed three private properties in the locality to jointly construct an alternative drainage system. Since the area falls under the jurisdiction of the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board, a joint inspection involving revenue department officials, KIADB representatives, GBA members and civic authorities was conducted before the work began.

Authorities subsequently initiated construction of two parallel drains covering a combined alignment of 1.57 km to divert excess rainwater from Manyata Tech Park into the Hebbal Main Valley drainage system.

According to BNCC documents, the first package of the project involves construction of a 622-metre drain connecting the Outer Ring Road service road to the Hebbal Main Valley between Manyata and Karle properties. The drain is currently under active construction.

BNCC Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar said multiple meetings had to be conducted with the companies before the work could finally begin.

"It was not easy initially to get them to start the drain work. After several discussions, all parties agreed and work has been progressing steadily for the past few months," he said.

Officials stated that temporary kaccha drains have already been completed to facilitate immediate water flow while curing work on the permanent concrete structures is under progress. The permanent pucca drains are expected to be completed before the end of May, ahead of the peak monsoon season.

Authorities also indicated that portions of the existing compound wall may be temporarily demolished to allow rainwater to flow into the newly-created temporary drains.

LOKAYUKTA INTERVENTION

The recurring flooding issue at Manyata Tech Park had earlier attracted the attention of the Karnataka Lokayukta, which initiated a suo motu case. Lokayukta Justice B S Patil and Upa Lokayuktas had visited the area to inspect the drain network, increasing pressure on authorities to implement a long-term solution.

BNCC installs flood warning markers at underpasses

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Ahead of the arrival of the monsoon next month, the Bengaluru North City Corporation has launched a new safety initiative by installing water-level warning markers at flood-prone underpasses across the city to help prevent accidents and loss of life during heavy rains.

Under the initiative, motorists and pedestrians approaching vulnerable underpasses will now be able to assess flood severity through newly painted water-level indicators and warning messages displayed prominently at the locations.

Officials said the markings indicate water levels ranging from one foot to four feet. Areas where water rises above two feet have been categorised as danger zones. Safety instructions warning commuters against entering submerged underpasses have also been painted alongside the markers.

The warning message states that once water reaches the

designated danger mark, the underpass should be considered unsafe for both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Emergency contact details of the corporation have also been displayed.

The move comes as civic authorities acknowledge that major structural modifications to existing underpasses are difficult to undertake immediately, especially with the monsoon approaching rapidly. While stormwater drain cleaning and maintenance activities are continuing, officials believe better public awareness and visible warning systems can significantly reduce risks during sudden flooding incidents.

The issue of waterlogged underpasses gained serious attention in Bengaluru after a software professional lost her life in 2023 after getting trapped in a flooded underpass near KR Circle.

According to BNCC data, there are 33 underpasses within its jurisdiction, of which 28 have been identified as flood-prone during heavy rainfall. Officials said water-level painting work has already been completed at 10 underpasses, while work is currently under progress at two more locations.

BNCC Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar said the markings are intended to function as an immediate warning mechanism for commuters and authorities.

"Once water reaches the red mark, traffic police can immediately barricade the underpass and stop vehicles from entering," he said. Officials added that although the initiative may appear simple, such precautionary measures are often neglected despite their importance in preventing avoidable tragedies during emergencies and extreme weather conditions.

Court sentences Taliban-linked accused to seven years

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A special National Investigation Agency court in Bengaluru has sentenced a Maharashtra-based man to seven years of rigorous imprisonment for his alleged links with banned terrorist organisations Taliban and Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and for attempting to radicalise and recruit youth.

The convicted accused, identified as Hamraj Worshid Sheikh, was also fined Rs 63,000 by the court. Officials said the trial against co-accused Mohammed Areef is still continuing.

According to the NIA, a case was registered against the accused in April 2023 under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. A chargesheet was later filed before the special court in October the same year.

Investigators said Hamraj had stayed in Saudi Arabia between 2019 and 2022.

Paralysed man loses Rs 30 lakh in WhatsApp trading investment fraud

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

A 52-year-old paralysed man from Bengaluru was allegedly cheated of more than Rs 30 lakh by cyber fraudsters who operated an elaborate stock trading scam through a WhatsApp group promising huge returns on foreign investments.

According to police, the victim, identified as Aravind from Ramamurthynagar, lost Rs 30.6 lakh between January 9 and May 1 after being trapped by fraudsters running a WhatsApp group named "Wealth Accelerator".

A complaint filed by his son with East CEN Crime police on May 16 stated that Aravind, who previously held a senior position in a private company, has been bedridden since July 2024 due to paralysis.

Police said the victim was added to the WhatsApp group earlier this year, where members regularly shared stock market updates, trading strategies and predictions regarding shares expected to appreciate in value. The fraudsters gradually gained his confidence by portraying themselves as professional market experts.

Investigators said the accused later introduced themselves as representatives of a company called "Falcon Globe Trading, USA" and allegedly circulated fake registration documents claiming approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India to appear legitimate.

Believing the investment platform to be genuine, Aravind downloaded a mobile application suggested by the group and initially invested in short-term trades.

The application reportedly displayed attractive profits and bonus shares, convincing him that the investments were real.

The fraudsters later persuaded him to invest in what they described as a "PayPal IPO" in the United States market, promising returns exceeding 200 percent. They subsequently introduced another IPO identified as "PLAI" and convinced him to apply for 8,000 shares.

A few days later, the accused allegedly informed him that 16,000 shares had been allotted and demanded Rs 60 lakh to complete the transaction, assuring him of returns of up to 280 percent after listing.

Police said the victim managed to transfer Rs 30 lakh after arranging money through personal loans, pledging family gold and borrowing from relatives and friends.

However, after receiving the amount, the fraudsters allegedly demanded the remaining Rs 30 lakh as well.

3 arrested for stealing 70 kg silver from jewellery shop in Bengaluru

CH NEWS, BENGALURU

Bagalagunte police have arrested three men for allegedly breaking into a jewellery store in Bengaluru and stealing nearly 70 kg of silver ornaments, cash and other valuables worth around Rs 1.2 crore.

The accused have been identified as Suresh, Dhanram and Nemichandra. Police said the main accused, Mahendra, remains absconding and efforts are underway to trace him.

The theft took place at MB Jewellery shop located in the RSK Commercial Complex in Havanur Layout on Hesaraghatta Road.

According to police, there is a ceramics warehouse adjacent to the jewellery shop.

On April 27, the accused allegedly entered the warehouse and broke through the rear wall of the jewellery store before stealing around 70 kg of silver ornaments, Rs 5 lakh in cash and other valuables. The complaint was filed by shop owner K Mahendra Kumar, following which a case was registered by Bagalagunte police.

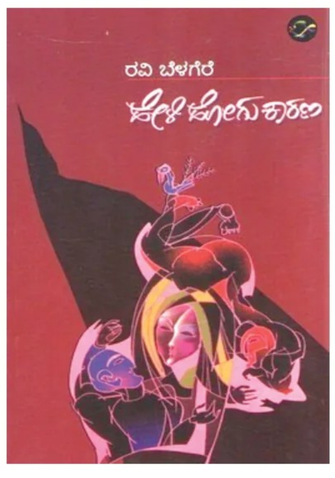
Investigators said the accused, all reportedly from Rajasthan, had carefully planned the burglary before executing the crime. After the theft, they allegedly travelled to Hyderabad where part of the stolen silver was sold before they escaped to Rajasthan.

Police formed a special investigation team and tracked the accused using technical evidence and surveillance inputs. The three men were later arrested in Rajasthan and brought to Bengaluru for questioning.

During interrogation, the accused allegedly confessed to selling part of the stolen property. Based on the information provided by them, police travelled to Hyderabad and recovered 29 kg of stolen silver ornaments.

COPYRIGHT VIOLATION

HC stays proceedings against Amazon in 'Heli Hogu Karana' copyright case



CH NEWS, BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has granted an interim stay on criminal proceedings initiated against Amazon Seller Services Private Limited in connection with allegations of copyright infringement involving the Kannada book Heli Hogu Karana, authored by late senior journalist Ravi Belagere.

A vacation bench headed by Justice K V Aravind passed the interim order while hearing a petition filed by Amazon seeking a stay on the police investigation. The court also issued notices to the Subrahmanyapura Police Station and complainant Bhavana Belagere and adjourned the matter to the third week of June for further hearing.

During the proceedings, counsel appearing for Amazon argued that the company functioned only as an intermediary platform connecting buyers and sellers and was therefore protected under Section 79 of the Information Technology Act.

The petitioner's counsel contended that third-party sellers independently listed products and determined prices, while Amazon merely facilitated transactions through its online marketplace.

The court was informed that all relevant details regarding the sellers involved in listing the disputed book had already been shared with the investigating officer. These included names, email addresses, mobile numbers, dates of first and last sales, and details regarding the quantity of books sold.

The controversy relates to the alleged unauthorised sale of Heli Hogu Karana, a popular Kannada book first published in September 2003. The 31st edition of the book was released in April 2005.

According to the complaint, the complete copyright ownership of the book currently rests with Bhavana Prakashan, managed by Bhavana Belagere, daughter of Ravi Belagere. The publication house holds exclusive rights for printing, distribution and sale of the book.

However, it was recently discovered that copies of the book were allegedly being sold through platforms such as Amazon, Flipkart and Meesho without authorisation and at prices significantly lower than the official market price.

While the original book is priced at Rs 350, the alleged pirated copies were reportedly sold online for Rs 149 through various apps and sellers.

Bhavana Belagere alleged that the sale of counterfeit copies caused financial losses to the publication house and violated the author's copyright protections.

Following her complaint filed on February 4, Subrahmanyapura police registered a case against Amazon, Flipkart and Meesho under Sections 51(1)(b) and 63 of the Copyright Act, 1957, dealing with copyright infringement and related offences.

QUICK READ

Mangaluru sees pharmacy shutdown over e-pharmacy protest

Mangaluru

Mangaluru witnessed a partial shutdown of medical stores in response to a nationwide strike called by the All India Organisation of Chemists and Druggists. Private pharmacies across the city remained closed, while outlets such as MedPlus, Apollo, Jan Aushadhi centres, and hospital-attached pharmacies continued operations. The district has over 1,100 medical shops, many of which joined the protest. The strike is aimed against the alleged illegal sale of medicines through online e-pharmacies and quick commerce platforms. The association said the protest highlights concerns over regulation, safety, and fair competition in the pharmaceutical retail sector across India.

Engineering student drowns in Netravati river

Beltangady

An engineering student drowned in the Netravati river near Pajiradka temple in Beltangady taluk after going swimming with a group of friends. The incident occurred when seven students entered the river. The deceased, identified as Shripoorna (21) from Gokak in Belagavi district and a final-year engineering student in Ujire, was later found after a night-long search operation. Local residents, fire and emergency services, and the Shaurya disaster response team participated in the rescue effort. The body was recovered around 9:30 pm. Police from Dharmasthala station have registered a case and are investigating the incident further.

CCTV cameras installed in Uppinangady after theft spree

Uppinangady

In response to a recent rise in burglaries and serial thefts in Uppinangady town under the Uppinangady police limits, the police have begun installing CCTV cameras at key locations. Six high-tech cameras have been set up at the bus stand circle and Gundya junction on the Dakshina Kannada district border to help curb theft and monitor illegal activities. The move follows multiple break-ins, including thefts at a police head constable's residence and four other locations on the same night in Padmunja and Uppinangady. Authorities also expect the cameras to ease traffic congestion and improve monitoring of violations. Police said the system will be linked to both the local station and district control room, enabling better crime tracking and enforcement across the region.

CID forest unit arrests three deer hunters

Chikkamagaluru

In Chikkamagaluru district, the CID Forest Unit police arrested three individuals for illegally hunting a deer in Attigundi village of Chikkamagaluru taluk. The accused have been identified as Venkaraman, Kanniyappan, and Suresh. Acting on credible information about illegal hunting near the Datta Peetha forest area, officials conducted a raid and caught the accused who had allegedly entered the forest and killed a deer. Weapons and hunting equipment used in the crime were seized during the operation. Authorities said interrogation is underway to check if they were involved in similar offenses earlier. The forest department warned of strict action against wildlife crimes.

MP Brijesh Chowta criticises state financial management system

BJP MP Brijesh Chowta has alleged that Karnataka's government has pushed the state into rising debt levels.

MANGALURU

Mangaluru MP Brijesh Chowta on Wednesday alleged that the Karnataka government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has pushed the state into a severe debt burden over the past three years. Addressing a press conference in Mangaluru, he said Karnataka, once known for fiscal discipline, is now facing worsening financial stress.

Chowta claimed that the state's fiscal situation has deteriorated significantly and cited observations from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report to support his allegations. He also criticised the government's 'Sadhana Samavesha' programme, questioning its justification amid rising debt levels.

He alleged that key welfare and development schemes have been poorly implemented, pointing to delays in housing projects under PM Awas Yojana and pending subsidy payments under the Ksheeradhare scheme for dairy farmers. He also claimed that large funds, including a corpus fund of ₹15,000 crore, were diverted without clear accountability.

The MP further alleged delays in salary payments and a slowdown in recruitment across departments, accusing the government of financial mismanagement. He also criticised the use of CSR funds in certain sectors and claimed that governance in Dakshina Kannada district was being affected due to resource constraints.

Responding to questions on rising fuel prices, he attributed the increase to global factors and said citizens understood the broader economic context. On welfare schemes, he clarified that the BJP supports such initiatives but argued that Karnataka's fiscal stress stems from poor financial planning and excessive borrowing without asset creation.

The allegations come amid ongoing political debate between the ruling Congress and opposition BJP over the state's fiscal health and development priorities.

Kannada school managements warn protest over salary grants

An Unaided Schools Association has demanded salary grant assurance for post-1995 Kannada medium institutions, warning of protest against the education minister on June 5.

CH NEWS, SHIVAMOGGA

The Karnataka State Association of Aided and Unaided School and College Managements and Employees Union has warned that it will stage a protest by laying siege to Education Minister S. Madhu Bangarappa's residence on June 5, demanding salary grant assurance for Kannada medium schools and colleges started after 1995, along with other guarantee schemes.

Speaking at a press conference, state president T.C. Shivappa said that although Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, and Education Minister S. Madhu Bangarappa often speak about protecting the Kannada language, their statements remain only in words and not in action. He alleged that the government lacks genuine commitment to the survival of Kannada medium institutions.

He said Kannada medium schools and colleges started after 1995 are currently in a distressed condition, and despite assurances made in the state budget, no concrete steps have been taken to provide financial support. He accused the education minister of repeatedly giving assurances but failing to implement them.

Shivappa further criticized the government for shifting responsibility and suggested that instead of delaying the issue, it should openly admit if it cannot provide grants to Kannada medium schools while simultaneously promoting English medium institutions.

He also questioned the relevance of involving literary figures in the issue of grant approval and accused the government of misleading the public with inconsistent data. He cited earlier estimates suggesting that extending salary grants would cost around ₹150 crore, while another official response indicated an annual requirement of ₹147.52 crore for thousands of teachers across primary and high schools.

He said previous discussions in the legislative assembly had also raised the issue, but no political will has been shown to implement the proposals. Union members present at the press conference supported the demand and reiterated the call for immediate action to safeguard Kannada medium educational institutions.

In the session held in July 2024, Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa gave a written reply to a question raised by MLA Puttanna. He stated that during the period 1995–2000, there were 386 unaided secondary schools with 3,088 employees, and 151 pre-university colleges with 2,468 employees. He added that if these institutions were brought under the grant-in-aid system, it would cost the government ₹334.98 lakh. He also said that there is no proposal before the government to extend grant-in-aid to them. He further alleged that Speaker Basavaraj Horatti, who has been elected multiple times from the teachers' constituency and has served as an MLA, Education Minister, and is now the Speaker, has still "betrayed" them.

—Santosh, union office bearer

Kettikal landslide fears rise as monsoon approaches in Mangaluru

MANGALURU

Mangaluru is stepping up monsoon preparedness as residents and officials raise concerns over possible landslides and flooding in vulnerable areas, particularly the Kettikal stretch near Vamanjoor along National Highway 169. With heavy rains expected in the coming weeks, locals have urged authorities to complete preventive measures before the season intensifies.

The Kettikal region has been identified as a high-risk zone after repeated landslides in the past two monsoons. The hillside was cut for highway expansion, weakening the slope and making it prone to collapse during heavy rainfall. Last year, a portion of the hill near a school gave way, sending soil and large boulders onto the road and causing major traffic disruptions.

Residents now report fresh warning signs, including visible cracks in the upper slope and trees leaning at dangerous angles. These developments have heightened fears of another landslide if rainfall becomes intense. Although earlier attempts such as soil-nailing were carried out, locals say they failed to provide long-term stability.

As a response, authorities have begun constructing a gabion wall using stone-filled wire mesh to reinforce the weakened slope and prevent further soil erosion. However, residents remain concerned about whether the ongoing work will be completed before peak monsoon conditions set in.

According to district disaster preparedness plans, officials have identified 92 flood-prone areas and 88 landslide-prone zones across Dakshina Kannada. Preventive measures such as drain desilting, slope stabilisation, and strengthening of vulnerable embankments are being implemented in phases.

Local communities living near hill slopes, streams, and low-lying areas have appealed for urgent and coordinated action. They emphasised that timely completion of safety works is essential to prevent damage to roads, property, and human life during the monsoon season.

An anti-nuclear protest march has begun from Besuru to Sagara opposing a proposed nuclear power plant project.

Anti-nuclear protest march begins from Besuru to Sagara

SAGARA

A large anti-nuclear protest foot march opposing the proposed nuclear power plant project at Besuru began on Wednesday, organized by the Malenadu Anti-Nuclear Struggle Forum. The march was launched from Besuru and is scheduled to proceed up to Sagara, drawing participation from activists, religious leaders, farmers, and local residents.

The programme held at the Basavanna temple premises in Besuru was inaugurated by Abhinava Channabasava Swamiji of the Mulagadde Mutt. Addressing participants later at Hulidevarabana circle, he said that the anti-nuclear movement would succeed only if it remained non-partisan and united across political lines.

Speaking at the event, Siddivira Swamiji of Talaguppa Koodali Mutt stressed that setting up a nuclear power plant in the ecologically sensitive Malenadu region would be inappropriate and must be abandoned in the interest of environmental safety.

Former MLA Swamirao also opposed the project, stating that no government can impose such decisions in the face of strong public resistance. He said organised collective movements would be crucial in protecting the region's ecological balance and livelihood concerns.

The march, carried out under the slogan "for land, water, air and life," passed through several villages including Hulidevarabana, Genasinakuni, Avinahalli, Kagehalla, Hosuru, Chipli School, Ikkery Circle and Suhabhit Billing before reaching Sagara.

Participants included environmental activists, farmers, local organisations, and representatives from various groups, including the Charaka institution. Supporters joined the march at multiple points along the route, expressing solidarity with the protest.

Organisers stated that the movement aims to highlight environmental risks and protect the fragile ecosystem of the Malenadu region from large-scale industrial projects.

Rough seas warning issued for K'taka fishermen till May 25

UDUPI

Fishermen along the Karnataka coast have been advised not to venture into the sea from May 20 to May 25 due to a weather warning issued by the India Meteorological Department and the Emergency Response Control Room of the Union Home Ministry. The alert cites the possibility of rough sea conditions and strong winds over the Arabian Sea region.

According to the advisory, wind speeds of 40–50 kmph are expected along the Karnataka and Kerala coasts, as well as in Lakshadweep, Maldives and the Comorin region between May 20 and May 22. In some areas, gusts could intensify up to 60 kmph, creating hazardous conditions for small and medium fishing vessels.

The warning also highlights that in parts of the southwest Arabian Sea, especially near the Somalia coast, winds may reach 45–55 kmph, with gusts up to 65 kmph. Similar conditions are expected across the Gulf of Mannar, southwest and southeast Bay of Bengal, and parts of the Andaman Sea. In certain zones near Sri Lanka and the southwest Bay of Bengal, wind speeds may exceed 65 kmph.

Authorities have strictly instructed fishermen already at sea to return to shore immediately and avoid taking further risk. Coastal administrations have been directed to ensure strict compliance with safety advisories and to maintain high alert levels across fishing zones.

The warning has been circulated to all coastal states and Union Territories, including Karnataka, Kerala, Goa, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Officials have urged fishermen to follow updates from the meteorological department closely until conditions improve after May 25.

MY Bharat initiative promotes awareness of welfare distribution systems

MANGALURU

Youth volunteers from MY Bharat Dakshina Kannada participated in a hands-on experiential learning programme aimed at understanding the functioning of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and food security operations in the region. The initiative was organised in collaboration with the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs to provide practical exposure to governance systems.

The programme began on May 18 at Praja Soudha in Dakshina Kannada, where participants were introduced to the structure and functioning of the Public Distribution System. Officials explained the key processes involved in ensuring food security, including procurement, storage, and distribution of essential commodities to eligible beneficiaries.

On the second day, the volunteers visited the Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies Corporation office and its storage godowns at Shaktinagara in Mangaluru. During the visit, they engaged in detailed discussions on the complete supply chain, starting from procurement of food grains from farmers to their distribution through fair price shops under the PDS network.

Participants also observed the operational aspects of storage and logistics, including quality control measures and inventory management systems used to maintain efficiency in the distribution process. Officials highlighted the importance of timely delivery and transparency in ensuring the effectiveness of welfare schemes.

In a separate visit, the group toured the Central Warehouse Corporation facility at Mannagudda, where they examined storage infrastructure and learned about the role of warehousing in supporting India's national food security system. The facility showcased modern storage practices designed to reduce wastage and maintain grain quality.

The four-day programme, scheduled from May 18 to 22, is designed to provide youth volunteers with practical insights into public administration and consumer affairs. It aims to strengthen awareness about government welfare systems and encourage youth participation in nation-building initiatives under the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Organisers stated that such experiential learning programmes help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world governance, enabling young participants to better understand the challenges and responsibilities involved in managing large-scale public distribution systems across the country.

KALLABETTU ADMISSION RALLY

Kallabettu school launches admission awareness rally

MOODBIDRI

A school admission awareness rally for the 2026–27 academic year was held at Kallabettu as part of the PM SHRI initiative, aimed at boosting student enrolment in the new academic session.

The programme, organised under the school enrolment drive, was inaugurated in Kallabettu village, Moodbidri. The initiative focuses on encouraging parents to enrol children in local schools and strengthening awareness about the importance of education in the region.

Education department officials and school staff highlighted various government efforts to improve access to quality education and ensure higher participation in school admissions. The rally also aimed to reach households and spread information about available facilities, academic opportunities, and support systems under the current education programmes.

The enrolment drive is part of a wider district-level campaign being implemented across Dakshina Kannada to increase admissions in both government and aided schools for the 2026–27 academic year. Officials said similar awareness activities are being conducted in multiple clusters and school zones to ensure maximum outreach.

Teachers and students participated in the rally, carrying banners and slogans promoting education and school enrollment. Local residents also extended support by joining the procession at various points in the village.

The initiative reflects ongoing efforts by the education department to reduce dropouts, improve literacy levels, and strengthen school participation in rural and semi-urban areas of the district.

The programme concluded with a call for parents and guardians to actively enroll children in schools and support educational development in the region.

QUICK READ

Upalokayukta hearing scheduled in Mandya district

Mandya

The Hon'ble Upalokayukta Justice B. Veerappa will visit Mandya district on May 21 and 22 to conduct a hearing and disposal program for pending complaints. The sessions will be held from 10 am to 5 pm at Ambedkar Bhawan in Mandya city. The hearing will focus only on complaints from Mandya and Malavalli taluks. Only those complainants who have already received official notices from the Lokayukta office will be allowed to participate. New complaints will not be accepted during the program. Citizens may submit fresh grievances later at the Lokayukta Superintendent of Police office, officials said in a release.

Dandeli issues strict new waste segregation rules

Karwar

Residents of Dandeli have been instructed to strictly follow new Solid Waste Management Rules 2026 issued under central guidelines. Households, shops, and commercial units must separate waste into green bin for wet waste, blue bin for dry waste, red bin for sanitary waste, and black bin for hazardous waste. Mixing of garbage is illegal and violators will face penalties as per rules. Municipal Commissioner of Dandeli has appealed to citizens to cooperate for a clean and beautiful city. Officials said awareness drives will continue and strict enforcement will begin across all wards immediately in Dandeli area.

State government honors Inspector Kiran Kumar

PAVAGADA

Revenue Inspector Kiran Kumar H. P. received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Government of Karnataka for his efficient work in implementing the Ataljee Janasnehi Kendra Yojana. During the three-year Service Dedication programme held in Tumakuru senior ministers and district officials felicitated him for his contribution to public service. Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwar, Revenue Minister Krishna Byregowda and District Collector Shubha Kalyan presented the felicitation letter. The certificate stated that his commitment ensured successful delivery of the Ataljee Janasnehi Kendra project across the region. These centres provide more than 800 government services including caste, income, land records, and pension facilities under one roof. The aim is to ensure fast and transparent services so that citizens do not need to visit multiple offices.

Minister prioritises sericulture growth in Coastal Karnataka

The minister announced modern sericulture training, stronger silk markets, transport subsidies, and additional staff support for farmers' development

VITLA

Animal Husbandry Minister K Venkatesh said that sericulture will get special priority in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts as the government plans to revive silk farming in the coastal region. He said sericulture was widely practiced in the region three decades ago but has declined and the government will promote it again with modern support. Free saplings, fertilizers, equipment and subsidies will be provided to farmers along with technical guidance to encourage new growers. The minister said sericulture can now be done easily using modern technology and training will be given to interested farmers in both districts. He added that silk markets and buying centres such as Ramanagara, Shidlaghatta and Kollegala will be strengthened to support farmers and reduce transport costs. Transport subsidy of thirty rupees will be given to farmers to help them carry silk to markets and improve their income. Officials said the department will appoint additional staff in Dakshina Kannada to strengthen sericulture development and improve field support services.

India has now become the leading silk producer in the world surpassing China while Mysore silk sarees continue to

have strong global demand. Silk prices currently range between six hundred and seven hundred rupees per kilogram giving farmers an average profit of around three hundred rupees per kilogram. At the event, senior farmers were honoured and subsidies and equipment were distributed to encourage more people to take up sericulture in the region. Officials said a target of fifty acres has been fixed for sericulture expansion in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts with subsidy support of up to one lakh rupees for silk reshed construction and machinery. The department also said awareness programmes and training camps will be conducted regularly to encourage rural youth and women to participate in silk farming activities.

At the district level silk farming fair held at Vitla, senior sericulture farmers were felicitated and government subsidies along with equipment were distributed to beneficiaries. Officials said the programme aims to revive traditional silk farming, improve farmer income, and strengthen the rural economy in coastal Karnataka through sustained support and planning in the region.

Officials review fund utilisation in Mandya

MANDYA

Karnataka State Brahmin Development Board reviewed loan usage under Vipra Self-Employment Direct Loan Scheme in Mandya and Maddur taluks. President Asagodu Jayasimha visited beneficiaries. Officials including directors and skill development officers were present. The team verified utilization of funds and progress of self-employment activities. Beneficiaries from both taluks interacted during the review. The department said the exercise aims to ensure proper use of government support and strengthen employment opportunities for eligible applicants. Officials said monitoring will continue to improve transparency and ensure effective implementation of welfare schemes in coming months further updates.

EXPERTS HIGHLIGHT ECONOMIC VALUE OF BEE CONSERVATION

CH NEWS BENGALURU

"World Bee Day" was organized by the Department of Apiculture and the All India Research Project on Bees and Pollinators at the University of Agriculture on Wednesday at the North Block Auditorium, GKVK, Bengaluru. The event brought together scientists, researchers, professors, farmers, students, and beekeepers to discuss the ecological and economic importance of bees.The programme was inaugurated by Dr. S. V. Suresh, Vice Chancellor of the University of Agriculture, Bengaluru. The chief guests included Prof. A. H. Rajasab and Dr. Sachin S. Suroshe. Special invitees included Dr. Mudalagiriyappa and Dr. Mohan I. Nayak. The programme was chaired by Dr. N. B. Prakash.Speakers highlighted the vital role bees play in pollination, biodiversity, agriculture, and food production. Referring to a quote commonly associated with Albert Einstein, they stressed that the disappearance of bees could severely affect life on Earth. Different species of bees, including Indian bees, European bees, and stingless bees, were discussed along with the structure of bee colonies.The convention also explored pollination biology and the co-evolution between bees and flowering plants. Researchers explained how bee foraging behaviour supports ecosystems and improves agricultural productivity. Bee products such as honey, wax, and bee venom were also discussed for their medicinal and commercial value.Another major focus was the economic importance of beekeeping. Speakers emphasized honey production, branding, certification, and purity testing using modern technologies to improve consumer trust and support farmers financially. Challenges such as pesticide use, diseases, and lack of scientific awareness were also addressed.

Collector urges dengue precautions in Mandya district

MANDYA

District Collector Dr. Kumar has urged people to take strong precautions against dengue, a dangerous infectious disease spread by the bite of Aedes mosquitoes, especially during the rainy season when stagnant water increases mosquito breeding in Mandya district. He chaired an inter departmental coordination meeting on dengue control at the district office on 19-05-2026 and instructed officials to strengthen prevention and awareness activities. He directed taluk hospitals to reserve at least five beds for dengue patients and asked schools to conduct regular health education programmes. He also instructed officials to stop roadside sale of cut fruits and open food items and to maintain hygiene in hotels, meat shops, and public places with proper waste disposal.

Gram Panchayats and municipal councils were asked to carry out regular fogging operations and the health department was told to create awareness among people for a clean environment and dengue free society. He emphasized that dengue is preventable and can be controlled through awareness, discipline, and community participation to build a healthy society.

Gram Panchayats and municipal councils were directed to conduct regular fogging, while the health department spreads awareness, stressing discipline, cleanliness, and community participation to prevent dengue

In the same meeting, Dr. Kumar highlighted the Central Government's Jnana Bharatam Mission aimed at preserving ancient manuscripts and palm leaf records for future generations. He said the project focuses on digitising old manuscripts using modern technology including artificial intelligence so that knowledge of science, art and philosophy is protected from destruction. He added that manuscripts should be identified in temples, monasteries, educational institutions and private libraries and local groups should help in awareness and preservation efforts. Officials including R C H Officer Dr. K P Ashwath, Deputy Director Lokesh and Tourism Department official Raghavendra attended the meeting.

He appealed to citizens, schools, colleges, and local organizations to actively participate in both health awareness and knowledge preservation programmes for the benefit of society and future generations. He said cooperation between departments is essential for controlling diseases like dengue and for successfully implementing national missions that protect traditional knowledge. He urged everyone to maintain cleanliness, follow health guidelines, and support government initiatives for a healthier and more informed society in Mandya district.

"Children: Citizens of Today, Not Just Tomorrow"

SUHANA SHIPRA

Despite countless articles, constitutional rights, and laws designed to protect children and minorities, society often appears hypocritical when there is empowerment without true representation. While activists continue to fight against exploitation and demand equal rights for all, child welfare is still frequently treated as a lesser cause. This is concerning because children are among the most vulnerable members of society and deserve equal dignity, protection, and opportunity.

A child requires a healthy environment to grow, along with proper access to education, healthcare, emotional support, and safety. Although governments have introduced various schemes and policies to protect children from abuse and exploitation, and organisations such as UNICEF continue to promote child welfare, millions of children still suffer from hunger, poverty, child labour, trafficking, neglect, malnutrition,

and lack of education. These issues affect both their physical and mental development and prevent them from reaching their full potential.Child rights activist Nagasimha Rao explains that India signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992, which encourages the promotion of child welfare and protection. However, poor implementation, lack of awareness, and limited publicity continue to weaken these efforts. Organisations such as CWC, JJB, SJPU, and KSCPCR exist to protect children, yet many citizens remain unaware of their roles and responsibilities.Society often believes that education alone will reduce child abuse and exploitation. While awareness through education is important, abuse still exists even in educated households and urban settings. According to the activist, one major reason is social stigma. Families often remain silent about abuse to protect their honour and reputation. Many people still treat children as their private property rather than individuals with rights and dignity.The stigma surrounding children's mental health is also deeply rooted in society. Parents and schools often prioritise academic success over emotional well-being, leaving children pressured and unheard. Children have four important rights: survival, protection, development, and participation. Yet society still ignores children's voices when making decisions that directly affect them. Emotional abuse is another issue that often goes unnoticed. Scolding, threats, comparison, shaming, and behavioural punishment are frequently normalised as discipline, even though they can leave lifelong psychological effects. Children are individuals with boundaries, emotions, and opinions, and adults must learn to respect them.Child welfare, education, protection, and participation should be a shared responsibility between society and the government. Children are not just the future of the nation — they are equal citizens today and deserve to be treated with care, respect, and humanity.

Lokayukta orders detailed probe in illegal sand mining

UDUPI

Udupi district Lokayukta reviewed a case related to illegal sand mining on May 20 after earlier order dated April 23 2026. The hearing noted that the District Collector did not submit a proper report despite instructions, and only partial responses were received. The Lokayukta observed serious allegations of large scale illegal sand extraction from river areas affecting ecology and public safety. It was reported that sand mining was happening beyond permitted zones and deep inside river banks using boats without GPS tracking systems. Photographs submitted by complainant Ganesh Shetty showed destruction of river islands and violation of environmental rules during mining activities. Senior geologist Vindhya also appeared but did not conduct independent inspection of the alleged illegal sites as required.

A Lokayukta police report later confirmed irregularities, lack of supervision, and absence of GPS enabled monitoring of transport boats. The report also highlighted possible financial loss to the government and environmental damage caused by uncontrolled sand removal. Considering seriousness of issues, Lokayukta ordered formation of an expert committee including officials from environment forest irrigation and pollution control departments. The committee

will inspect the sites, assess violations, estimate damage, and submit detailed reports within the given deadline. Members include representatives from engineering college departments, forest office, pollution board, irrigation department, land records, and Lokayukta police. They are scheduled to visit the site on May 21 and may conduct further inspections next week if required.

All experts will also provide individual reports based on their findings and submit them to the authority by June 16. The Lokayukta further directed respondents including District Collector and mining department officials to file explanations at the next hearing. It was observed that no preventive action had been taken so far despite serious allegations and evidence presented in the case. The matter will be reviewed again on June 20 at 12.30 pm for further proceedings and compliance review by the authority. Authorities emphasized that strict monitoring, accountability, and coordinated action are essential to stop illegal sand mining and protect river ecosystems in Udupi district.

Lipi printing press inaugurated at Moodbidri campus

MOODBIDRI

Dr. M Mohan Alva, President of Alvas Education Foundation, formally inaugurated the 'Lipi' printing press within the foundation's campus in Moodbidri on Wednesday. He described the facility as a significant step towards delivering superior quality services to the public through advanced technology and state-of-the-art machinery at affordable rates.The new printing unit aims to meet requirements in education, commerce, and general public printing. It focuses on delivering reliable service through customised designs, clear printing output, and timely delivery.The press is equipped to handle both small and large volume jobs using digital and offset printing systems. 'Lipi' features modern equipment including CTP, single-colour, two-colour and four-colour offset machines, digital printing services, cutting machine, binding machine, folding machine, and lamination machine.It will offer a wide range of products such as pamphlets, brochures, flyers, invitation cards, registers, ledgers, visiting cards, business cards, bill books, receipt books, and various stationery items. Both digital and offset services are available, and bulk orders will also be accepted.The inauguration event was attended by Alvas Education Foundation Trustee Vivek Alva, Director of Alvas Rangadhyayana Kendra Dr. Jeevanram Sullia, Balakrishna Shetty, 'Lipi' Printing Press Supervisor Shantharam Nayak, principals of various colleges, and other dignitaries.

New bus shelter opens in Kudluru village

HUNSUR

ITC ABD Division General Manager P Praveena Kumaru said a bus shelter is as important for a rural town as a temple. He said it helps people travel between towns and gives protection from sun, rain and wind. Inaugurating the new bus shelter at Kudluru village, he said it will benefit elders, women, farmers and students who travel daily. More than 200 people use this route every day and the shelter gives them safety during travel. Dr Preissy Siraro of Mysore Division said the bus shelter was built for school and college children of Kudluru village and should be used carefully and kept clean.

Cuddalore Church Father Stanley D'Amleda said there were many problems during construction but PDO Ramanna helped complete it in a legal and proper way. He added that people from Kudluru, Biranahalli, Kaval and Kattemule villages will benefit from it and should make good use of it. Several officials from ITC ABD Division, Asyra Seva Trust and local organizations attended the event for community development support work.

QUICK READ

Two killed in Koppal highway accident

Koppal

Two bikers died on the spot after a head-on collision between a cement lorry and a motorcycle near Rajur village bypass road in Kukanur taluk on Wednesday evening. The deceased were identified as Basanna Googeri (55) and Shankrappa Suttarotti (48) from Balutagi village in Yelburga taluk. Police said the bike was moving from Kukanur to Yelburga when a speeding lorry hit it around 4.30 pm. The impact crushed the bike and both riders were trapped under wheels, dying due to heavy bleeding. Traffic was disrupted for a short time.

Gig workers urged to register for social security

Mandya

Unorganized sector workers including porters, tailors, mechanics, barbers, carpenters, goldsmiths, potters, weavers, drivers and gig workers have been asked to obtain smart cards immediately. Labor inspectors of Mandya taluk said registered workers under various welfare schemes and the Karnataka State Motor Transport and Other Related Workers Board must visit offices 1 and 2 circles to collect smart cards. Officials said all unorganized workers already enrolled under Ambedkar Karigara Sahay Hasta Yojana should not delay and must complete registration process to ensure benefits of government social security and insurance support for their families immediately informed by officials.

BJP workers stage protest over illegal immigration

Hubballi

BJP workers in Hubballi staged a protest in front of the city police station, alleging illegal entry of Bangladeshi immigrants into Karnataka through different routes, including railway stations. They claimed that Rohingya and Bangladeshi Muslims were entering the state in large numbers due to fear of action in other regions. Protesters expressed concern that some local residents were providing shelter to such immigrants, which they said could affect internal security. They urged police and railway authorities to increase monitoring and take strict action against illegal entry. They also raised slogans against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, and Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara during the protest. Police maintained security at the protest site and monitored the situation as the demonstration continued peacefully.

BWSSB gains global honor for water excellence

BWSSB was globally recognized for its Five Pillars model, supporting water conservation, recycling, infrastructure, and SDG 6 goals

BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board BWSSB has brought international recognition to India by securing a place among the Top 5 water utilities in the world at the Global Water Summit 2026 held in Madrid Spain The achievement marks a major milestone for Bengaluru in urban water management and sustainable development practices

BWSSB is the only Indian water utility to be recognized in three major global categories at the summit The organisation was praised for its innovative "Five Pillars" model which focuses on water conservation wastewater recycling reuse infrastructure development and sustainable governance systems These efforts were highlighted as a strong contribution towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 6 which aims to ensure clean water and sanitation for all peopleAt the global event BWSSB was placed alongside leading water utilities from countries such as Chile Malaysia Brazil and other nations in the sustainability category It was also ranked among the Top 5 utilities of the year along with major organisations from the United States Brazil and Saudi Arabia The recognition was based on its performance in water supply sanitation technology use infrastructure growth and overall service management over the past three years

The board's Cauvery Stage V drinking water project designed to meet Bengaluru's growing water demand was also selected among the Top 5 global water projects It stood alongside major infrastructure projects from China India Philippines and Serbia showing Bengaluru's rise in global water innovation and planningBWSSB Chairman Dr Ram Prasath Manohar represented the organisation at the summit and held discussions with global experts on urban water solutions He said the recognition reflects Bengaluru's commitment to sustainable water management under the guidance of the state leadership He added that the board continues to focus on long term solutions using technology driven planning and efficient service delivery to meet future needs

International delegates appreciated Bengaluru's efforts in handling water challenges in a fast growing city and described it as a model for other urban centres worldwide

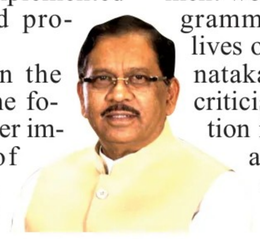
Officials said the achievement strengthens Bengaluru's global image and supports its goal of becoming a sustainable water secure city through continuous innovation improved infrastructure and citizen focused governance across all water services in the coming years.

Government accepts opposition views as positive criticism: Parameshwara

TUMAKURU

Parameshwara emphasized faster scheme implementation, clarified land title distribution, affirmed Tumkur name stability, and highlighted ₹2 lakh crore welfare spending for poor farmers and workers.

Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara said that whenever a party is in power the opposition naturally shows a mood of criticism and disagreement. He said the government accepts such comments as positive criticism and uses them for better governance. Speaking to the media in Tumakuru he said the Congress government is working for pro-people policies and supporting the poor through guarantee schemes. He added that the government has completed three years in power and has implemented all the promised programmes.



He said that in the next two years the focus will be on faster implementation of ongoing schemes. He clarified that the distribution of land titles to 1.50 lakh people is not an anti-people step. He also said there is no intention to force people and no malicious motive behind the programme. On Tumakuru development he said the name of Tumkur will not change and its identity will remain the same. He said the idea is to promote Tumkur as part of Bengaluru to attract more investment and growth. He stated that the government has spent around Rs 2 lakh crore on guarantee schemes for the welfare of the poor farmers and workers.

The statement came during a Congress government event in Tumakuru marking three years in office. At the event development works worth Rs 682 crore were launched and land deeds were distributed. He said the government will continue to focus on development works and welfare programmes to improve the lives of people across Karnataka. He also said that criticism from the opposition is part of democracy and helps the government correct its policies and decisions.

The programme was organised in collaboration with the Tumakuru district administration and Zilla Panchayat as part of the three-year celebration of the Congress government.

He urged people to understand government programmes and support development efforts aimed at building a stronger and more prosperous Karnataka in the coming years. He reiterated that there is no hidden agenda in the government's decisions and all initiatives are designed only for public welfare, transparency, and long-term development across the state of Karnataka.

Minister Patil said the project will improve irrigation, enable double cropping, and enhance lakes and groundwater availability year-round

Kollegala lakes project to boost industry water supply: M B Patil

BENGALURU

Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil announced that the State Government has prepared a plan to enhance water storage capacity of Agara and Madduru lakes in Kollegala taluk to supply Cauvery river water for industrial areas around Bengaluru while also benefiting local farmers with improved irrigation facilities. The Minister said discussions were held with Kollegala MLA A R Krishnamurthy at Khanija Bhavan in Bengaluru to address concerns regarding the project He clarified that the initiative will use water already allocated for industrial purposes under the Cauvery Water Tribunal and will not affect agricultural water supply.He explained that out of the total 4 TMC feet of water allocated for industrial use about 1.37 TMC feet is currently being used and the remaining 2.5 TMC feet will be utilised for industrial supply to Bengaluru and surrounding regions during the coming phase of development.According to the plan water will be pumped directly from the Cauvery river during monsoon for about 120 days while during the remaining period water will be drawn from the strengthened lakes The storage capacity of Agara lake will be increased from 0.156 TMC feet to 1.156 TMC feet and Madduru lake from 0.111 TMC feet to 1.112 TMC feet without requiring additional land acquisition as only lake depth will be increased.Minister Patil said the project will not cause hardship to farmers in the command area Instead it will help them shift from single crop cultivation to double cropping by ensuring better irrigation support throughout the year He added that Chikkahole and Suvarnamukhi lakes downstream will also be developed to provide year round water availability and improve groundwater levels in the region.

Officials said the project will also support fisheries boating and tourism activities in the area Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Managing Director Mahesh said the selected lakes are ideal for storage expansion and will ensure efficient water distribution to industrial zones while improving local agriculture conditions.Senior officials from the Industries Department KIADB and Irrigation Department attended the meeting and confirmed that farmers will be informed about the benefits and implementation plan to prevent misinformation and ensure smooth execution of the project across the region.

Railway begins environmental campaign across multiple stations

KALABURAGI

The Central Railway's Solapur Division has launched a special environmental awareness campaign from May 15 to June 5 in connection with World Environment Day, focusing on the theme of "Climate Change".Officials said the campaign aims to spread awareness about environmental protection, climate change, and the importance of adopting eco-friendly lifestyles among railway employees, passengers, and the general public across multiple stations.As part of the initiative, various programmes including awareness drives, rallies, cleanliness activities, tree plantation, seminars, and community participation events are being conducted in regions such as Solapur, Kalaburagi, Wadi, Shahabad, Pandharpur, Kurduwadi, and Latur.

NEET paper was sold not leaked says Hegde

KUNDAPUR

Former minister K. Jayaprakash Hegde alleged that the NEET question paper was not leaked but sold, during a protest organised by NSUI in Kundapur on Wednesday. The protest was held near Shastrivrita against what they described as irregularities in the national medical entrance examination system.Hegde said that the future of lakhs of students has been affected due to repeated NEET controversies. He argued that instead of conducting NEET under the central government, the exam should be handled through the state CET system, which he claimed had a better track record without question paper leaks.He further said that when CET was conducted earlier in Karnataka, there were no incidents of paper leaks or malpractice. He demanded strict investigation into those involved in selling the question papers and punishment for all guilty persons. Congress leader Dinesh Hegde Molahalli also criticised the system, stating that repeated NEET paper leak allegations have made students' hard work meaningless. He demanded strong action against those responsible and called for the resignation of the Union Education Minister.

Shanidev message inspires devotees during Jayanti celebrations

KALABURAGI

Speaking at Shanidevar Jayanti celebrations held at Sri Bhimeshwara Temple in Tengali village of Kalagi taluk, Andagi Foundation president Shivraj Andagi said Shanidev teaches people that every person must face the results of their actions. He explained that Shanidev even punished his father Surya for injustice, not out of hatred but to protect justice and truth. He urged people to help the poor, avoid wrongdoing and follow good values in daily life.

Shivraj Andagi also said many people still fear keeping Shanidev's photo at home, but Shanidev only punishes those who commit bad deeds. He recalled watching the popular Shani Mahatme television serial and said its message still inspires devotees today. Earlier, Bhimeshwara Temple Development Trust president Virendra Vali offered special prayers to the portrait of Shanidev. Senior harmonium artist Vishwanath Balade, tabla artist Chandrasekhara Elheri, Dr Vivekananda Bulla and several villagers attended the celebration programme at the temple with devotion and respect. Community leaders praised the event for spreading values and spiritual awareness among villagers.

Governor meets Lad over Dharwad split proposal

DHARWAD

Labour and Dharwad district in-charge minister Santosh Lad met Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot at Lok Bhavan in New Delhi with a delegation of Dharwad MLAs and submitted a memorandum urging approval for bifurcation of Hubballi-Dharwad Municipal Corporation into a separate Dharwad Municipal Corporation. Speaking to media Minister Santosh Lad said that there has been a long standing demand for a separate corporation for Dharwad city.

SATELLITE MAPPING UNVEILS LAKKUNDI HERITAGE TREASURES

BENGALURU

Tourism Minister HK Patil announced that historical Lakkundi in Gadag district will soon reveal 101 temples and 101 ancient wells through satellite imaging technology developed in collaboration with the National Institute of Advanced Studies NIAS The announcement was made during a meeting held at Vidhana Soudha with scientists and heritage experts.The minister said that since 2023 more than 70 monuments including 32 temples 28 wells and several other structures have already been identified in Lakkundi He added that efforts are underway to fully uncover and document the remaining heritage sites by December 31, 2026 with the support of NIAS experts and local communities.He also said that more than 1500 archaeological remains were discovered in November 2024 and a second phase of exploration launched on May 2, 2026 has already identified over 1800 fossils Plans are in place to discover more than 5000 fossils in total and display them in an open air museum for public viewing and research.The government is also preparing a proposal to include Lakkundi in the UNESCO World Heritage list The minister said that development work is underway to restore Panch Temples and Panch Bavi while Dasha Temples and Dasha Bavi projects are also being progressed as part of heritage revival efforts.Former ISRO Chairman Dr Kiran Kumar welcomed the initiative and said satellite technology can play a major role in uncovering hidden heritage structures He expressed support for the mission and said collaboration between scientists and government will help bring global recognition to Lakkundi.

SURVEY LAND DISPUTE

Priyank Kharge orders probe into illegal mining case

KALABURAGI

District in-charge Minister Priyank Kharge has directed the Kalaburagi Deputy Commissioner to conduct a detailed investigation into allegations of illegal stone mining in Kerur village of Kalaburagi taluk.

The direction came after a complaint was submitted at the minister's office in Bengaluru by Jai Bhim Jai Sammandeep Bachao Sangh president Ram Rathod, who raised concerns about alleged illegal mining activity in Survey No. 55/8 of Kerur village.

The complaint stated that illegal stone extraction and unauthorized land transactions had taken place on the land linked to Akash Basavaraj Mattimadu, son of BJP MLA Basavaraj Mattimadu from Kalaburagi Rural constituency. It also alleged that transactions continued despite pending cases in court and before the Lokayukta.

According to the petition, a case is already registered in the 5th Additional Civil Court under P C No 250/2025, and the matter is still under hearing. The complainant has demanded that all illegal land transfers be stopped immediately and that strict legal action be taken against those involved.The petition further urged authorities to shut down an allegedly illegal stone crusher operating in the area and to carry out a comprehensive investigation into mining activities in the village.After reviewing the complaint, Minister Priyank Kharge reportedly instructed the district administration to verify the allegations on the ground and take appropriate action as per law.Officials have been asked to examine the case thoroughly and ensure that any violation of mining or land laws is addressed without delay, with necessary legal proceedings initiated against those found responsible in the matter.

Abhay Chandra Jain supports Jokatte protesters strongly

SURATHKAL

The ongoing day and night protest by residents of Jokatte, Kenjaru and Kalavaru continued for the third consecutive day in front of the MRPL Coke Sulphur unit, demanding speedy rehabilitation and creation of a green zone in the heavily polluted residential area.The villagers have been protesting against delayed land acquisition and rehabilitation measures, saying that pollution from the industrial unit has seriously affected their health and living conditions. They also demanded immediate action as promised earlier by authorities.Former minister Abhay Chandra Jain visited the protest site and expressed strong support for the agitating residents. He said that during his tenure in 2016, steps were taken to address the severe pollution issue in Jokatte and an expert committee was formed to suggest solutions, followed by official orders.He criticised MRPL for not implementing the promised rehabilitation and green zone project even after several years.

QUICK READ

VCK considers joining Vijay-led TN cabinet

CHENNAI

Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi president Thol Thirumavalavan said the party would discuss Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam's renewed invitation to join the Vijay-led government in Tamil Nadu. He stated that TVK leaders assured him rebel AIADMK legislators would not be included in the Cabinet, addressing a major concern raised earlier by the VCK. Thirumavalavan said the party had supported the government unconditionally to ensure political stability. He also thanked Minister Aadhav Arjuna for publicly expressing TVK's interest in including VCK in governance. The party will now hold internal discussions before taking a final decision on joining the Cabinet officially.

Twisha family alleges justice delayed in Bhopal

BHOPAL

Twisha Sharma's father alleged that delays by authorities allowed his daughter's body to decompose, leaving the family with no hope for justice. Police asked the family to take custody of the body after AIIMS Bhopal reportedly said it lacked facilities to preserve it properly. The family has refused to accept the body until a second postmortem is conducted outside Madhya Pradesh. Twisha's father accused police, administration and courts of failing to support the family during the investigation. He claimed delays were intentional and demanded an independent examination at AIIMS New Delhi to transparency and restore confidence.

Fourth arrest made in Greater Noida Dowry Case

GREATER NOIDA

Police arrested Deepika Nagar's mother-in-law, Poonam in connection with the alleged dowry death case, taking the total number of arrests to four. Earlier, police also arrested Vinod, uncle of Deepika's husband Hrithik. Authorities said Hrithik and his father Manoj were already in custody. Deepika died under suspicious circumstances in Greater Noida's Ecotech-3 area. Her family alleged she faced mental and physical harassment over dowry demands after her marriage 14 months ago. The postmortem report revealed several injuries and signs of severe trauma. Police are continuing raids to arrest other accused persons in the case.

ED ISSUES FRESH SUMMONS TO EX-TMC MINISTER IN JOB SCAM

Ghosh has been served with a notice to appear before investigators at the ED office in Salt Lake on May 25 for further questioning

KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) issued a fresh round of summons to Rathin Ghosh, the former West Bengal Food and Supplies Minister, for further interrogation regarding the multi-crore municipality recruitment scam.

Ghosh, a four-time Trinamool Congress (TMC) lawmaker representing the Madhyamgram Assembly constituency, has been ordered to report to the ED's regional headquarters at the Central Government Office (CGO) Complex in Salt Lake by May 25. The deadline notably coincides with the official results announcement for the Falta Assembly constituency re-polling.

The senior TMC politician has skipped multiple summonses by the federal anti-money laundering agency over the past few months, repeatedly citing hectic election campaign commitments. He finally relented on May 15, enduring a grueling 10-hour interrogation session by central investigators. While entering the

facility last week, Ghosh claimed he was completely unaware of why he was being targeted, though he remained tight-lipped upon his exit.

The investigation has recently intensified, with another heavyweight TMC figure, former State Fire Services Minister Sujit Bose currently in ED custody over the same cash for jobs racket. Bose recently suffered an electoral defeat in his native Bidhannagar constituency.

The multi-layered municipality recruitment scam was inadvertently uncovered by federal agents during a raid on the residence of a TMC-linked real estate promoter, Ayan Shil, who was initially being investigated for a separate school-jobs cash scam. Following a directive from the Calcutta High Court, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is currently running a parallel criminal probe into the civic body appointments, which continues to unearth a vast web of politically influential figures.

CM Yadav approves employee transfer policy

BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, approved the state's much-awaited employee transfer policy. Under the new rules, all government transfers will take place within a strict, short window between June 1 and June 15 to ensure a smooth administrative process. Meanwhile, special high-level transfers recommended directly by the Chief Minister must be completed by May 31. The policy sets clear limits on how many employees can be shifted to prevent arbitrary movements. Departments with fewer than 200 workers can transfer up to 20 percent of their staff, while those with over 2,000 employees are restricted to just 5 percent.

Assam govt surveying land bank for future institutions: CM

GUWAHATI

In a bid to secure future infrastructure development, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced that the state government has launched a massive, detailed assessment of government land surrounding Guwahati.

The strategic initiative aims to create a dedicated land bank to house future educational institutions, public facilities, and industrial estates.

Speaking to reporters during a high-profile inspection of the Jagiroad Assembly constituency, Sarma revealed that large pockets of state-owned land have already been mapped out in the Dharamtul area and its neighboring zones. The Chief Minister personally surveyed a massive parcel of nearly 300 bighas of government land to ensure it is securely cordoned off from illegal encroachment and haphazard private development.

Accompanied by senior state officials, Sarma explained that the intense pressure from real estate expansion prompted this sudden push to secure state property. Jagiroad has increasingly become a focal point for economic activity, especially following recent state infrastructure projects aimed at boosting Central Assam.

goals of strategic land bank

- Encroachment prevention: Immediate mapping and fencing of state-owned properties near rapidly urbanizing borders.
- Future industrial growth: Securing large, connected plots to support upcoming industrial infrastructure.
- Strategic expansion: Utilizing Jagiroad's proximity and strong connectivity to the state capital to establish a central hub for governance and education.

During a public rally in Raebarelit, the LoP in LS had labeled PM Modi and HM Shah as "traitors."

RAHUL'S 'TRAITORS' REMARK KICKS UP POLITICAL STORM

NEW DELHI

A massive political storm has erupted after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi openly labeled Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah as "traitors."

Speaking at a public rally in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh, Gandhi accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) of working against national interests and destroying the Constitution. He urged voters to boldly call out these leaders to their faces, claiming they have collaborated to sell the nation.

As the remarks triggered nationwide controversy, the Congress party quickly jumped to Gandhi's defense. Party spokesperson Pawan Khera stated that the comments simply mirror the growing anger and frustration among ordinary citizens.

Khera argued that even people who previously voted for the current government now feel deeply betrayed, disappointed, and anxious about India's future.

He claimed that the public's actual language on the streets is far harsher, and the leaders must learn to face this bitter truth.

However, the political drama has also created cracks within the opposition alliance. The Samajwadi Party, a key Congress ally, chose to distance itself from the heavy statement. Member of Parliament Awadhesh Prasad clarified that they do not endorse such aggressive language in political debates.

SC slams repeated bail applications

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has canceled the anticipatory bail granted to a man and his wife accused of cheating his 75-year-old mother in a multi-crore property fraud.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and K. Vinod Chandran stated that filing repeated bail pleas in quick succession turns the legal system into a "mere gamble" and constitutes a clear abuse of process.

The case involves Vasantha, a senior citizen who accused her son, Karthikeyan Manikandan, and daughter-in-law, Vasupradha, of serious financial exploitation. According to the police complaint, the couple tricked the elderly woman into selling family land, secretly pocketing around 22 crore rupees from the deal. Furthermore, they allegedly forced her to transfer her house to them under the false promise of lifelong care, only to throw her out and leave her homeless.

The Madras High Court had initially rejected the couple's bail request, noting that police interrogation was necessary. However, within just a month, the accused approached a different judge at the same High Court and successfully secured bail.The Supreme Court strongly criticized this second High Court order, pointing out that the judge failed to check previous rejections or identify any changed circumstances.

The apex court emphasized that this was not a simple business dispute, but a cruel case of taking advantage of an elderly parent.

Bullet Train Project Crosses Major Gujarat Milestone

BHARUCH

A massive 130-metre steel bridge span has been successfully built over a railway freight corridor in Gujarat for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train. This brings the state's tally to 14 completed steel bridges out of 17. The high-tech, durable structure ensures seamless, long-term high-speed rail connectivity.

SC issues notice on PIL seeking 30% reservation for women lawyers

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court issued notices to the Central government, states, and Union Territories regarding a plea demanding a minimum 30 percent reservation for women advocates on government legal panels. A bench led by Chief Justice Surya Kant agreed to review the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and scheduled the matter for next week.

The petition, filed by the Ladli Foundation Trust, seeks mandatory representation for female lawyers in all High Court panels, public sector undertakings, and official law officer positions. Senior advocate Vikas Singh highlighted a recent survey by the Supreme Court Bar Association, pointing out that women continue to face severe systemic exclusion and underrepresentation within institutional legal opportunities across the country.

Data presented in the plea reveals that women make up only about 25.3 percent of panel lawyers across major states. It also noted glaring historical gaps, emphasizing that India has never had a female Attorney General or Solicitor General since Independence. Furthermore, none of the current Additional Solicitors General handling various High Courts are women.

The petitioners argued that government panels serve as crucial stepping stones for career growth and judicial promotions. Denying women equal access to these platforms directly impacts their professional leadership. They urged the top court to enforce affirmative action, similar to its previous directives that mandated gender quotas within bar association governing bodies, ensuring the legal system reflects the constitutional promise of true equality.

DRI 'Op Golden Drop' seizes gold worth 4.8 cr

MUMBAI

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has busted a highly organized gold smuggling syndicate operating at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. Acting on specific intelligence, officials intercepted three kilograms of foreign-origin gold valued at 4.8 crore rupees. The targeted crackdown, codenamed "Operation Golden Drop," resulted in the immediate arrest of an airport employee.

The investigation exposed a highly sophisticated smuggling method. The syndicate converted illegal gold dust into wax form and packed it into specially designed, egg-shaped capsules. Transit passengers then ingested these capsules to sneak them into the country. Once inside the terminal, a cleaning staff member working at an airport food outlet received the contraband. This employee was tasked with secretly smuggling the gold out of the airport to evade customs scrutiny.

Officials stated that the syndicate deliberately exploited transit channels and internal airport staff to bypass strict regulatory checks. This major seizure comes amid intensified government efforts to curb gold smuggling, protect national economic interests, and conserve foreign exchange reserves following recent hikes in customs duties.

CBI to probe past administrative failures

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu's power sector is drowning in a massive financial crisis, with the State Electricity Board currently carrying a staggering debt of nearly 2.5 lakh crore rupees. State Electricity and Energy Minister Nirmal Kumar has openly blamed the previous Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) administration for this mess, alleging widespread financial irregularities, corruption, and legal violations during their tenure.

Speaking to the media, the Minister revealed that several severe cases of misconduct from the previous regime have already been handed over to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for a thorough probe. He emphasized that the newly formed Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) government is fully committed to uncovering the truth and ensuring such administrative failures never happen again.

According to Kumar, years of terrible mismanagement and structural neglect have slowly broken down the state's main power utility, which serves millions of households.

He stated that a complete and aggressive restructuring of the Electricity Board has now become absolutely unavoidable to save it from total collapse.

Despite the deep financial hole, the Minister assured the public that the government is actively exploring all possible structural solutions to revive the department.

The ultimate goal is not just paying off the massive mountain of debt, but also completely modernizing the board's operations. Kumar promised that the current administration will rebuild the institution from scratch, making it self-sufficient, highly efficient, and capable of providing uninterrupted power supply to every citizen across Tamil Nadu.

Government of Karnataka
BENGALURU URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYAT
O/o Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,First Floor, Zilla Panchayat Buidling S. Kariyappa Road, Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple) Bangalore-560070.
No.EE/PRED/BNG(U)/TND/AE-1/10/2026-27 Dated: 19.05.2026
Short Term Tender Notification Single Cover System
Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, For **BPS Grants Grants Works.** The work details can obtained from the KPPP Web Site The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **Dated:29.05.2025 upto 4.00 pm.** Further details can be obtained from web site at **http://www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours
Sd/- Executive Engineer,
Panchayatha Raj Engineering Division,
Bengaluru Urban Dist, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/Shirdi Sai/753/2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
BENGALURU URBAN ZILLA PANCHAYATH
Olo Executive Engineer,
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, First Floor,
Zilla Panchayat Building, S. Kariyappa Road,
Banashankari (Near Banashankari Temple), Bengaluru 560070.
Phone No: 080-26716046 Website: http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
No.EE/PRED/BNG(U)/TND/AE-1/09/2026-27 Dated:19.05.2026
KPPP Tender Notice (Single Cover System)
TENDER NOTIFICATION
Tenders are invited through KPPP Portal by the Executive Engineer, P.R.E.D. Bangalore Urban, **For MLA, MP, 4202 Toilet Grants Grants Works.** The work details can obtained from the KPPP Web Site The Tender Documents can be obtained and submitted on or before **Dated:05.06.2025 upto 4.00 pm.** Further details can be obtained from web site at **http://www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in** or contact this office during office working hours.
Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division,
Bangalore Urban Dist, Bangalore.
DIPR/CP/752/Shirdi Sai/2026-27

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact: **080-41209042**

Fake visas to Iraq land 3 in jail

JAIPUR

The Rajasthan Police have uncovered a major interstate fraud network following the arrest of three men at Jaipur International Airport.

The individuals were caught trying to board a flight to Baghdad, Iraq, using fake tourist visas. Security officials seized the forged travel documents and have initiated a deep investigation to track down the larger criminal syndicate responsible for manufacturing them.

The arrested passengers have been identified as Suresh Kumar from Uttar Pradesh, along with Alok Kumar Singh and Rupesh Yadav, both from Bihar. According to senior police official Ranjita Sharma, the trio triggered suspicion during routine document verification at the immigration counter. On being closely questioned by airport authorities, the men panicked and eventually confessed to the fraud.

Interrogation revealed that the men held original multiple-entry Iraq visas but were unable to travel using them. Looking for a shortcut, they connected with a Jaipur-based travel agent named Mukesh Lakhar, who promised to arrange fake tourist visas. Following his instructions, they arrived in Jaipur on May 17 and stayed at a local hotel.

The agent delivered the forged papers and trained them to lie to the officers. He coached them to claim they were traveling to repair a malfunctioning machine shipped from Jaipur. However, the plan fell apart when alert immigration officials noticed anomalies in their documents. The police have registered a case under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. They are intensively questioning the suspects to locate the absconding agent and smash the illegal visa racket.

QUICK READ

Satheesan cabinet features fresh faces after decade

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala's new United Democratic Front government led by V.D. Satheesan completed portfolio allocation for its 21-member Cabinet after days of political discussions. The ministry marks the UDF's return to power after a decade and includes several first-time ministers and legislators. Congress leaders Bindu Krishna and K.A. Thulasi became part of the Cabinet, increasing women's representation. Ramesh Chennithala received the Home portfolio, while Satheesan retained Finance and Law departments. Disagreements over Fisheries and Health portfolios delayed the final decision. Meanwhile, veteran leader G. Sudhakaran was sworn in as Pro-tem Speaker of the Assembly.

Patna teacher aspirants detained amid protests

PATNA

Police detained over 50 student leaders and teacher job aspirants in Bihar's capital ahead of a planned protest demanding release of Bihar Teacher Recruitment Exam phase four notifications. Security was tightened near Patna College, with gates locked and water cannons deployed to prevent gatherings. Protesters alleged long delays in recruitment, leaving thousands of vacancies unfilled for years. Some leaders, including Rinkle Yadav and Khushboo Pathak, were detained. Officials said action was taken to maintain law and order during exams. The education minister said the notification would be released soon and urged students to remain calm officially soon.

Telangana issues heatwave alert as temperatures soar

HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has urged people to take precautions as the India Meteorological Department warned of severe heatwave conditions across several districts. He directed officials to ensure drinking water supply, ORS availability and uninterrupted electricity. Health departments were asked to treat sunstroke patients effectively, while local bodies were told to set up free drinking water centres. Residents have been advised to avoid outdoor movement during peak afternoon hours. IMD forecasts heatwave conditions in multiple districts over the next five days.

Telangana seeks Rs 5000 crore from Centre under SASCI

The assistance has been sought under the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment to fund key welfare and infra projects

NEW DELHI

Telangana has requested an additional 5,000 crore rupees in financial help from the Central government.

Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka presented this request directly to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during a high-level development meeting held in New Delhi.

The financial assistance has been sought under the Scheme for Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI). Vikramarka updated the Union Minister on Telangana's ongoing massive welfare programs and critical investments focused on healthcare, rural infrastructure, education, and human resource development.

A major talking point during the discussion was the state's ambitious 30,000 crore rupees initiative called the Young India Integrated Residential Schools (YIIRS). To support this project, the Telangana delegation requested a special exemption from Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) limits for all Externally Aided Projects approved by the Department of Economic Affairs.

Vikramarka explained that this mega education project is designed to transform schooling and nutritional standards for lakhs of children, effectively strengthening India's future demographic dividend. Accompanying the Deputy Chief Minister, state Agriculture Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao pointed out that the majority of Telangana's population belongs to marginalized, socially, and educationally backward communities. According to official data, over 56 percent of the population belongs to Backward Classes, 17.43 percent to Scheduled Castes, and 10.45 percent to Scheduled Tribes, making immediate central funding absolutely essential for their long-term growth and upliftment.

HC blow for minister's accused son

HYDERABAD

Union Minister Bandi Sanjay Kumar claimed he surrendered his son, Bandi Bhageerath, in a POCSO case, contradicting Cyberabad Police reports of a formal arrest

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, has strongly claimed that he personally handed over his son, Bandi Bhageerath, to investigators following a case under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. According to reports, Kumar questioned if anyone had ever seen a father willfully surrendering his own child to cooperate with law enforcement.

However, the Minister's claims clash directly with statements from the Cyberabad Police, who reported executing a formal arrest of Bhageerath on May 16 in Narsingi.

Following his arrest, a local magistrate placed the youngster into 14 days of judicial custody.

The legal action intensified after the Telangana High Court rejected Bhageerath's request for temporary protection against arrest.

Visiting the state BJP headquarters for the first time since the scandal broke, Kumar was greeted warmly by enthusiastic party workers. When asked about opposition demands seeking his immediate dismissal from the Union Cabinet, the Minister launched a fierce counterattack against Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K. Chandrashekar Rao. Kumar mocked the party's current lack of representation in the Parliament, stating that KCR is merely spreading fake propaganda from his farmhouse.

All local institutions should complete mandatory UMEED portal registration by May 26, it stated

Guj Waqf Board sets strict portal registration deadline

GANDHINAGAR

The Gujarat State Waqf Board has issued an urgent appeal to all administrators, trustees, and institutions across the state to complete their mandatory registration on the UMEED portal by May 26. The board emphasized that this serves as the final deadline, warning that no further time extensions will be granted under the current legal framework.To facilitate smooth compliance, the board has activated a dedicated helpline to offer technical and procedural support during the digital enrollment process. This statewide drive is part of a larger national initiative introduced by the Ministry of Minority Affairs.

The Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development (UMEED) portal functions as a single national database designed to centralize and digitize ownership, income, and administrative records.

Launched to improve transparency and prevent illegal encroachments, the platform uses advanced features like geo-tagging, property surveys, and digital lease tracking. Board officials noted that this unified digital layout is a major structural reform aimed at replacing fragmented local files, ensuring long-term asset protection, and significantly cutting down property disputes.

Despite multiple previous advisories, a large number of local Waqf bodies in Gujarat have still not completed their profiles. The state board warned that institutions failing to register by the fast-approaching deadline will face serious administrative hurdles and legal complications. Trustees have been strictly advised to upload all authentic property documents immediately and avoid submitting incomplete applications to prevent facing individual penalties for non-compliance.

Stop politicizing icon Zubeen Garg: CM

GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma criticized opposition parties for trying to use the legacy of late iconic singer Zubeen Garg for political gains.

Speaking to reporters at "Zubeen Khetra," the memorial site near Guwahati where the artist's last rites were performed, Sarma stated that these actions have deeply hurt public sentiments.

The Chief Minister explained that he personally oversaw the final arrangements at the site.

However, he expressed disappointment that certain politicians introduced toxic debates, making the sacred location uncomfortable to visit during the state elections.

Sarma emphasized that a true artist belongs to everyone and must always remain above political affiliations. He expressed relief that the election dust has settled, allowing people to refocus on celebrating Garg's rich music, unique character, and immense cultural contributions.

Sarma launched a direct attack on the Congress party, claiming they tried to appropriate the singer by placing his pictures at polling stations.

He asserted that this strategy backfired completely because the public strongly disliked seeing a beloved cultural icon dragged into political warfare.

He further alleged that the opposition members who claimed friendship during the elections were actually the ones who heavily criticized the singer during his lifetime.

TN health minister opposes NEET

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Health Minister Dr. K.G. Arunraj strongly criticized the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), calling it unfair to marginalized students.

Speaking at his first official review meeting at Madras Medical College, the newly appointed minister declared that the centralized entrance exam openly undermines state rights and creates massive barriers for poor, rural students trying to access medical education.Arunraj slammed federal attempts to impose standard rules across a diverse nation, arguing that policy frameworks should respect the unique social and educational realities of individual states instead.

Delhi expands work from home for workers

NEW DELHI

Following the massive success of its recent "Metro Monday" campaign, the Delhi government has significantly expanded its work-from-home initiative.

State Minister Kapil Mishra announced that cabinet ministers, senior officials, and government employees will now work remotely two days a week, specifically on Wednesdays and Saturdays, to conserve fuel.

Mishra stated that this green policy aligns directly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's national appeal for sustainable energy conservation. Currently, Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta is managing state affairs digitally through the Jan Seva Kendra, while ministers and departmental heads conduct all official interactions via online meetings.

The Minister also praised the public's enthusiastic response to the "Metro Monday" drive, which successfully encouraged residents to ditch private cars for public transit.

The sudden surge in passengers forced the Delhi Metro to increase its daily train trips, while the Delhi Transport Corporation expanded its local feeder bus services.

Mishra noted that the twin campaigns have already visibly reduced road traffic congestion, steadily transforming into a permanent lifestyle shift for residents.

Drone narcotics delivery busted near border

JAMMU

In a major breakthrough against cross-border smuggling networks, the Jammu and Kashmir Police intercepted and seized a large heroin consignment weighing up to two kilograms in the Bishnah sector near the International Border with Pakistan.

Officials confirmed that the high-value contraband was dropped via a drone coming from across the border and was successfully seized before it could reach the intended recipients.

The successful operation followed a week of precise intelligence gathering. Dedicated police teams from the Jammu Headquarters Zone maintained a strict, round-the-clock vigil in the suspected border sectors to intercept the payload. A specialized team from the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) was called to the spot to conduct a detailed chemical analysis of the recovered narcotics and secure vital scientific evidence.

Authorities described the massive seizure as a severe blow to the regional narco-terrorism ecosystem. A comprehensive investigation has been launched to trace both the forward local buyers and backward international links of the Pakistan-based smuggling network.

This operational success coincides with the ongoing 100-day "Nasha Mukt J&K Abhiyaan" anti-drug campaign launched by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on April 6.

Nationwide police blitz smashes cyber fraud network

HYDERABAD

In a massive crackdown on cybercrime, the Hyderabad Police have dismantled a major nationwide "Ghost SIM" network. Dubbed Operation Octopus 3.0, the intense seven-day blitz led to the arrest of 66 individuals across 13 states.

Ghost SIMs are mobile connections secretly activated using the identities of unsuspecting citizens. Cybercriminals use these cards to mask their identities while defrauding people. Hyderabad Police Commissioner V. C. Sajjanar revealed that investigators identified 1,194 of these fraudulent SIMs, seizing 544 in the city alone. Alarmingly, 432 of these cards were sealed and ready for criminal deployment. The arrested suspects include 44 SIM holders, two suppliers, and 20 telecom promoters or Point of Sale agents from major networks like Airtel, Jio, and Vodafone Idea. Police disclosed that these suspects are collectively linked to 76 cybercrime cases across India.

Government of Karnataka
GULBARGA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, KALABURAGI
(Autonomous Institution of Govt. of Karnataka)
E-mail:directorgimsgulbarga@gmail.com Phone No 08472-260252

No. GIMS/KLB/Tender/Misc/CR/19/2026-27/401 Date:19-05-2026

:: TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through e-procurement) ::

Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences, Kalaburagi invites tender for eligible bidders in bid system (Techno-commercial Bid & Financial Bid) in e-procurement 2.0 mode for the SUPPLY OF **"Miscellaneous Items" For Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences Hospital Kalaburagi.** Details are available in the site: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Last date and time for upload of e-tender in E-procurement platform as follows.
1) Commencement of download of e-Tender Form from website-https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in **No. GIMS/KLB/TENDER/Misc/CR/19/2026-27, Date:19.05.2026. IND. No: DME/2026-27/IND2332,** 2) Last Date for Queries: **30-05-2026 at 17:00 pm**, 3) Pre-bid Meeting:**04-06-2026 at 12:30 pm**, 4) Last Date for Uploading of Tender in e-procurement platform on or before **18-06-2026 at 4.30 pm**, 5) Opening of Techno-Commercial Bid: **19-06-2026 at 05:00 pm**, 6) Opening of Tenders Financial bid: **20-06-2026 at 11:30 am**. 7) Tender amount: **Rs. 4,08,56,500=00**, 8) EMD : Rs. 2,00,000=00, 9) Contact Details: Director, GIMS Kalaburagi veresh Nagar sedam road Kalaburagi 585105. Office Email: directorgimsgulbarga@gmail.com Land Line:08472-260252, Cell:+91 9482093568, Tender Section Email: gimstenderklb22@gmail.com, Cell:+91 9972688602.

Sd/- Director,
Gulbarga Institute of Medical Sciences, Kalaburagi.
DIPR/Kalaburagi/148/KSMC&A/2026-27

Government of Karnataka
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PANCHAYATH RAJ ENGINEERING DIVISION, CHAMARAJANAGARA-571313
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION NO. 05/2026-27 DATED: 19-05-2026
(Two Cover System)

On behalf of the Governor of Karnataka the Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chamarajanagara invites tender in co-ordination with e-procurement portal platform, Bangalore. Tender format as per **KW-2** through e-procurement under the Head of Account **CMIDP** for Date of application submission for tender document and submission of filled tender through online **Date: 11-05-2026 to 30-05-2026 upto 16.00 hours.** Last date for clarifications/ queries on tender **Date: 25-05-2026 upto 16.00 Hours.** date of opening of technical bid of the tender **Date: 01-06-2026 after 17.00 hours.** After the approval of Technical bid the Financial Bid will be opened. Tender Form Fee: As per e-procurement Details as belows.

Sl. No	Name of work	Estimate Cost (Rs.in Lakhs)	Approximate Value of work (Rs. in lakhs)	Earnest Money Deposit (in Rs)	Contractor Eligibility
1	ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು ಬೂದಿತಿಟ್ಟನಿಂದ ಬೆಂಡರಹಳ್ಳಿ ಮಾರ್ಗವಾಗಿ ಮುಡಿಗುಂಡ– ಕುಣಗಳ್ಳಿಗೆ ಹೋಗುವ ರಸ್ತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ (02ನೇ ಕರೆ)	75.00			Class - III & above
2	ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು ಸಿದ್ದಯ್ಯನವರಿಂದ ಕೆಂಪನಪಾಳ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಗುವ ರಸ್ತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ರಸ್ತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ (02ನೇ ಕರೆ)	80.00			Class - III & above
3	ಕೊಳ್ಳೇಗಾಲ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕು ಉತ್ತಂಬಳ್ಳಿಯಿಂದ ಮುಳ್ಳೂರು ಜಂಕ್ಷನ್ ಸೇರುವ ರಸ್ತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ರಸ್ತೆ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ (02ನೇ ಕರೆ)	60.00			Class - III & above

For more details visit website: **htpp://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** or contact the Executive Engineer, Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chamarajangara **(Ph: 08226- 223019)** during office hours.

Executive Engineer,
PRED Division, Chamarajángara

AE Phone No: 8073339806
NO: DIPR: CHANAGAR : 119: 2026-27

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT DIVISION, VIJAYAPUR.
I.F.T.No:EE/PWD/D/VJP/AIRPORT/QUOTATION/2026-27/420
Dated:16.05.2026

NOTICE INVITING QUOTATIONS FOR

DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF RUNWAY LIGHTING SYSTEM INCLUDING SIMPLE APPROACH & CAT 1, ETC. at VIJAYPUR AIRPORT, KARNATAKA.

FOR PREPARARTION OF ESTIMATES

Sealed Quotations are invited from the reputed Company / Firms **DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING & COMMISSIONING OF RUNWAY LIGHTING SYSTEM INCLUDING SIMPLE APPROACH & CAT 1, ETC. at VIJAYPUR AIRPORT, KARNATAKA** as per the enclosed specifications on the terms and conditions as given herein for preparation of estimates.
1) The rates should be inclusive of all Services and applicable taxes.
2) The rates should be quoted for the quality items and in case, if any change in items this should be clearly stated.
3) The rates should be valid for the period of at least (3) Three months from the date of quotations and the bidders are bound to submit at these rates, when orders are placed within the validity period.
4) Items specifications will be displayed on Notice board of this office. Please contact office of Executive Engineer PWD Division, Station road Vijayapura or contact No: +91 9900106481 for any queries.
5) Sealed quotations should be reach this office on or before 01.06.2026 @ 4.00 P.M. or handed over personally in this office. Delay in postal transit will not be considered.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,
ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/108/ಕೆಎಸ್.ಎಂಸಿಎ/2026–27 **PWD Division, Vijayapur**

QUICK READ

Putin-Xi promote multipolar world order

BEIJING

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening ties and promoting a multipolar world order during high-level talks in Beijing. Both leaders said relations between Russia and China had reached an unprecedented level and described their partnership as a model for international cooperation. Putin highlighted expanding economic and strategic projects between the two nations over the past 25 years. Xi warned against growing unilateralism and called for fair global governance. The leaders also discussed regional security concerns and international conflicts.

Fresh disappearance allegations raise concerns in Pak

BALOCHISTAN

Fresh allegations of enforced disappearances in Pakistan have drawn criticism after students and civilians reportedly went missing in Islamabad and Balochistan. According to reports, archaeology student Qambir Baloch was allegedly abducted near Islamabad by unidentified men believed to be linked to intelligence agencies. Student organisations claimed authorities failed to follow legal procedures and did not register a proper police complaint. Activists also highlighted other missing students and civilians from Balochistan whose whereabouts remain unknown. Human rights groups and Baloch activists have repeatedly accused Pakistani security agencies of involvement in enforced.

India-S. Korea forge historic cyber-defence alliance

The alliance focuses on locking down vulnerable critical military infra, neutralizing sophisticated digital threats, and establishing high-level channels for real-time info exchange

SEOUL

In a major move to reshape Indo-Pacific security dynamics, India and the Republic of Korea (ROK) signed a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The agreement specifically targets enhanced cooperation across the critical, fast-evolving frontiers of cybersecurity, intelligence operations, and military information sharing.

The milestone pact was signed during an official diplomatic visit to Seoul by Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, alongside his South Korean counterpart, Defence Minister Ahn Gyu-back.

Recognizing the rapidly morphing nature of modern warfare, the strategic alignment will focus on locking down vulnerable critical military infrastructure, neutralizing sophisticated digital threats, and establishing high-level institutional channels for real-time information exchange to maximize regional situational awareness.

Demonstrating deep bilateral respect before the high-profile ceremony, Defence Minister Singh visited the Seoul National Cemetery.

He laid a wreath and observed a solemn moment of silence to pay tribute to South Korean servicemen and women who lost their lives during the Korean War, reinforcing the historical and emotional foundation of the alliance.

The strategic stop in South Korea marks the successful second leg of Singh's high-stakes, two-nation security tour, which initially featured bilateral talks in Vietnam from May 18 to 19.

Arriving in Seoul alongside Ambassador Gourangalal Das, Singh took to social media to summarize the vision behind the security blitz. He emphasized that the freshly minted MoU will directly pave the way for robust military-to-military engagement and defense industrial partnerships, laying down a united front to safeguard peace and stability across the Indo-Pacific region.

Pentagon tallies steep aircraft losses in operations

WASHINGTON DC

The documented aircraft losses present a significant blow to US aerial assets

A new report has revealed that the United States military lost or suffered heavy damage to 42 aircraft during a intense 40-day joint bombing campaign with Israel against Iran.

Conducted under the military code name "Operation Epic Fury," the ongoing conflict has involved massive air, maritime, and missile combat engagements across the Middle East.

According to the official report, the military operations initially began on February 28, 2026. While combat actions slowed down following a temporary ceasefire in April, localized airstrikes resumed within weeks, leaving regional conditions highly fluid.

Although the Pentagon has not released a comprehensive public assessment of combat losses, acting Pentagon Comptroller Jules W Hurst III recently testified that the estimated cost of these military operations has skyrocketed to an astronomical 29 billion dollars.

The documented aircraft losses present a significant blow to US aerial assets. The tally includes elite fighter jets like four F-15E Strike Eagles and a highly advanced F-35A Lightning II.

The multilateral military exercise 'PRAGATI 2026' commenced in Meghalaya, bringing together 12 friendly nations to boost regional security.

PRAGATI 2026 flaunt cutting edge defense tech

SHILLONG

A massive multilateral military exercise named 'PRAGATI 2026' officially commenced at the Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya.

The two-week-long event brings together armed forces personnel from 12 friendly nations, including Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, to boost regional security and strategic coordination.

Defence spokesman Lt. Col. Mahendra Rawat explained that PRAGATI stands for the Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region. Conducted in a spirit of friendship and mutual respect, the exercise offers a shared platform for global armies to engage in professional exchanges and build closer military ties.

Welcoming the international contingents, Major General Sunil Sheoran of the Indian Army emphasized the high importance of collective engagement in tackling modern security challenges.

He urged participants to learn from each other's diverse perspectives. The extensive training will focus heavily on counter-terrorism operations within challenging semi-mountainous and jungle terrains, featuring joint tactical drills to improve endurance and troop proficiency.

Additionally, the exercise will showcase cutting-edge Indian technology. Local defense companies are set to display indigenous equipment under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative, highlighting India's growing self-reliance in defense production. Ultimately, Exercise 'PRAGATI 2026' is expected to deepen professional bonds and foster a unified approach to shared security threats among regional partners.

PM Modi celebrates 'Kashi in Rome' via Italian artist's masterpiece

ROME

In a stunning display of cul tural diplomacy, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed profound admiration for renowned Italian painter Giampaolo Tomassetti during the final leg of his high-profile five-nation tour.

Tomassetti presented the Prime Minister with a breathtaking, intricately detailed painting of Varanasi, India's ancient and deeply spiritual city also known as Kashi.

Lauding the painter's lifelong dedication to exploring and translating Indian heritage, PM Modi took to social media to share the encounter, writing:

"A glimpse of Kashi in Rome! Giampaolo Tomassetti, an Italian painter, presented his work on Varanasi."

He highlighted that Tomassetti's creative passion for Indian culture spans over four decades, pointing out that the artist began illustrating Vedic culture books in the 1980s and spent five years (2008–2013) crafting 23 massive, highly acclaimed canvas paintings detailing the Mahabharat epic.

The artistic exchange occurred shortly after PM Modi landed in the Italian capital, where he was greeted with a vibrant welcome from the local Indian diaspora.

Immediately following his arrival, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni hosted Modi for a private dinner.

Meloni warmly shared a picture of the two leaders with the caption, "Welcome to Rome, my friend!"

Following their dinner, Modi and Meloni took a late-night stroll through the iconic Colosseum, engaging in deep conversations regarding global and bilateral affairs.

The diplomatic push comes at a time of unprecedented momentum for India-Italy relations, as both administrations aggressively execute their Joint Strategic Action Plan 2025–2029.

The extensive framework covers critical avenues including defense, clean energy, science, and trade which soared to an impressive 16.77 billion dollars in 2025 proving that the bond between New Delhi and Rome is growing stronger through both economic and artistic ties.

HRW ACCUSES ARAKAN ARMY OF WAR CRIMES

DHAKA

Two years after the ethnic armed group, the Arakan Army, massacred hundreds of Rohingya Muslims and burned their village in Myanmar's Rakhine State, survivors remain trapped without any redress, Human Rights Watch (HRW) revealed. The comprehensive report documents the horrific May 2, 2024, assault on Hoyyar Siri village.

According to HRW, Arakan Army fighters deliberately fired on unarmed civilians seeking safety during clashes with Myanmar's military junta. Although the rebel group denied the allegations, HRW compiled a list of over 170 dead or missing villagers, including 90 children, using eyewitness testimonies and verified satellite imagery. Survivors stated that fighters shot families waving white flags, executed wounded individuals, and burned the entire settlement.

The human rights organization noted that survivors are now effectively detained in makeshift camps by the Arakan Army.

Those who recently escaped to Bangladesh reported severe food shortages, denial of free movement, and forced labor. They also alleged that the rebel group conducted a staged media visit last August, forcing captives to give false testimonies exonerating the troops.

Meenakshi Ganguly, HRW's deputy Asia director, stated that the horrific massacre took Myanmar's internal conflict to a new level of depravity. She criticized both the rebel group and the indifferent military junta for failing to hold perpetrators accountable.

With over a million Rohingya already displaced by decade-long ethnic cleansing, HRW urged concerned international governments to pressure both factions to protect civilians and cooperate with independent United Nations investigators.

Pakistan profit repatriation hits $2 bn

KARACHI

Foreign companies operating in Pakistan repatriated 172 million dollars in profits and dividends to their respective global headquarters during April 2026. According to the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), this marks a substantial 42 percent surge compared to the same month last year, signaling a smoother outflow of foreign capital.

The central bank's report highlighted a steady upward trajectory for the broader fiscal year. For the first ten months of the current fiscal year 2025–26 (10MFY26), cumulative profit repatriation climbed to just over 2 billion dollars. This represents an 8.7 percent increase from the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year, reflecting improved dollar liquidity and a relaxation of capital controls by the central bank.

The financial business sector emerged as the primary driver behind this sudden spike in repatriated funds, leading the pack.

Dalai Lama hailed as global peace symbol

DHARAMSHALA

Tibetan spiritual leader, the 14th Dalai Lama, attended a deeply moving long-life prayer ceremony at the Tsuglagkhang Temple complex.

The auspicious event, jointly organized by the Central Dokham Chushi Gangdrug and the Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association, drew an overwhelming crowd of more than 6,000 devotees, including monks, nuns, and international followers from across the globe.

The traditional ceremony holds immense spiritual and cultural significance for the Tibetan community in exile, serving as a collective demonstration of profound reverence and global devotion toward their octogenarian leader. Devotees expressed immense gratitude for the rare opportunity to receive his personal blessings, with some participants revealing they had spent up to three years preparing for this singular, emotionally charged day.

Amid rising geopolitical tensions and global conflicts, international attendees described the Dalai Lama as an enduring, vital symbol of universal peace. Organizers.

RAIN WRATH

Downpour, thunderstorms batter NW Pak

ISLAMABAD

Severe weather conditions have triggered widespread devastation across Pakistan's northwest province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

At least two people lost their lives, and 11 others sustained injuries as torrential rainfall, fierce thunderstorms, and heavy winds wreaked havoc across multiple vulnerable communities over the last 24 hours.

According to a detailed report from the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), the two fatalities occurred during rain-related incidents overnight in the Mardan district.

Meanwhile, emergency rescue teams recorded widespread injuries elsewhere, including four individuals hurt in Battagram, six in Swat, and an additional victim in Mardan, all requiring immediate medical attention.

The hostile weather has left a trail of structural damage in its wake, completely destroying four residential homes in Shangla and Battagram. Furthermore, 27 houses were severely compromised across Torghar, Swat, Upper Dir, and Mardan, while an educational facility in Shangla also sustained severe damages due to the worsening weather system. Livestock were killed and standing crops were destroyed, inflicting deep economic distress on local farming families.

With the Pakistan Meteorological Department warning that intense dust-thunderstorms and sporadic rain will persist across upper regions until May 23, the PDMA has placed multiple districts on high alert. Authorities are monitoring sensitive mountainous zones to mitigate the potential risk of sudden flash floods, landslides, or glacial lake outbursts.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, POOJA PARASAPPA BATI alias LAXMI MEDEDAR D/o REVANASIDDA, W/o PARASAPPA BATI, R/o Kolhar, Basavana Bagevadi, Bijapur, Karnataka-586210, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as LAXMI REVANASIDDA MEDEGAR.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, BEBY D/o THANIYAPPA MALEKUDIYA, R/o Bomanadka Mane, Malavanthige, Belthangady, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka-574214, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as BABY.

NAME CHANGE

I, **MAHAMAD IRSHAD**, S/o. Jakriya Sab, Resident of No.10, 2nd Cross, Umar Nagar, Nagawara, AC Post, Bengaluru-560045, have changed my name to **IRSHAD AHMED**, Vide Affidavit Dated: 20.05.2026 before notary R. BASAVARAJA, Bengaluru.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sagar S S/O Sreenivasan S R/O Address: Aspen woods apartments, Doddakamanahalli main road, Hulimavu, Bangalore South, Hulimavu, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560076, I have changed the name of my minor son Adhvik to Atharva Sagar aged 3 years

CHANGE OF NAME

I, RAMA KRISHNA M G S/o M N GOPALACHARY R/o 11, Borewell Road, Near Rama Temple, Annasadra Palya, Vimanapura, Bangalore North, Bangalore, Karnataka 560017, have changed the name of my minor son MANYAM RAMAKRISHNA TEJASWIN ACHARI aged 13 years and he shall hereafter be known as TEJASWIN MANYAM ACHARY.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PRADEEP S/o PANDURANG NAVASARE, R/o Chikli (U), Tq Aurad, Chikli Udgir, Aurad, Bidar, Karnataka-585326, have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as PRADEEP NAVASARE.

IN THE COURT OF THE I ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.170/2026

Petitioners: Sri.Muniraju.M S/o Late Doddamuniyappa @ Muniyappa Aged about 35 years, R/at Khanehosahalli Village, Aralumallige Post, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District. V/s
Respondent: Registrar of Birth and death The Tahshildar Doddaballapura Taluk.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioner has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioner by name LATE POOJAMMA W/O LATE DODDAMUNIYAPPA @ MUNIYAPPA who died on 26.08.2007 at Khanehosahalli Village, Kasaba Hobli, Doddaballapura Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 24.06.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the 20th day of May 2026.

By Order of the Court
Chief Ministeral Offer Prl. Civil Judge & J.M.F.C. at Doddaballapura

Advocate: **Byregowda.B.M**, #6, 1st Floor, Chikkavenkataramanappa Complex, Main Road, Near Manasa Hospital Rojipura, Doddaballapur Town.

Document Lost

My client Smt. Gangamma wife Devaraju, Gundapura Village, Halagur Hobli, Malavalli Taluk and Mandya Dist., is owning immoveable property bearing Janjar No. 454 and property katha No. 454 and same was acquired by her through Regd. gift deed vide registration No. MLV-1-05913-2011-12 and CD NO. MLVD84, dated: 27-02-2012.
The document bag is been missing while travelling from Gundapura house to Halaguru on 23-04-2026 at about 5-30 PM. Inspite of best effort to search it could not be traced. Hence my client is also filed complaint to police. If said Regd. Gift is found please contact mobile NO. 9845739480 or please inform nearby police station.

Contact Adress:
M.K. Manjunatha, Advocate, and Bank Legal Adviser, # 4310, 3rd Cross, R.K. Badavane, Channapatna-562160, Ramanagara Dist.
Place: Channapatna.
Date: 18-05-2026.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.269/2026

Petitioners: Smt.Lakshmi.V D/o Late Venkatappa W/o Late Jayakumar Aged about 37 years, R/at Ward No.31, Kacheripalya Doddaballapura Town, Bengaluru Rural District and another. V/s
RespondentdÜ Registrar of Birth and death The Commissioner, CMC Doddaballapura Town. Doddaballapura and others.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioners has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the father of petitioners by name LATE VENKATAPPA S/O LATE THIMMAIAH who died on 15.11.1998 at Ward No.31, Kacheripalya, Doddaballapura Town, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 13.07.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the day of 06.05.2026.

By Order of the Court
Chief Ministeral Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura

Advocate **Sreeranga,** Opposite to Court Complex, Rojipura, Doddaballapur Town.

IN THE COURT OF THE II ADDITIONAL CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC AT DODDABALLAPURA
CMis.No.270/2026

Petitioners: Smt.Lakshmi.V D/o Late Venkatappa W/o Late Jayakumar Aged about 37 years, R/at Ward No.31, Kacheripalya Doddaballapura Town, Bengaluru Rural District and another. V/s
RespondentdÜ Registrar of Birth and death The Commissioner, CMC Doddaballapura Town. Doddaballapura and others.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas the Petitioners has filed the above petition under Section 13 (3) And 14 Of Registration Of Births And Deaths Act, 1969 for seeking the death certificate of the mother of petitioners by name LATE CHANNAMMA W/o VENKATAPPA who died on 16.12.2020 at Ward No.31, Kacheripalya, Doddaballapura Town, Bengaluru Rural District.
In this regard it is hereby notice that whoever has interested in the said matter may appear in person or through an advocate duly authorized before the above said court on 13.07.2026 In default this matter will be heard and disposed off an ex-parte order.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on the day of 06.05.2026.

By Order of the Court
Chief Ministeral Officer, Prl Civil Judge & JMFC Doddaballapura

Advocate **Sreeranga,** Opposite to Court Complex, Rojipura, Doddaballapur Town.

CH CLASSIFIEDS
To place a classified ad contact:
080-41209042

ANRF picks 10 institutions for multidisciplinary research

These centres will focus on interdisciplinary solutions for societal challenges, sustainability and emerging technologies

NEW DELHI

India's apex funding agency, the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), has selected 10 Convergence Research Centres of Excellence to strengthen multidisciplinary innovation across science, technology, social sciences and humanities, according to an official statement released on Wednesday.

The initiative aims to build pioneering research hubs that integrate diverse academic fields to address complex societal challenges through transdisciplinary approaches. Selected institutions include IIT Gandhinagar, NIAS Bengaluru, IIT Madras, NIT Agartala, IHD Delhi, IIT Dharwad, IIM Jammu, IIT Kanpur, Chanakya University and PSGR Krishnammal College for Women.

These centres will focus on

thematic areas such as archaeology, traditional knowledge systems, digital humanities, rural development, healthcare innovation and computational economics. The programme encourages collaboration both within institutions and across national research bodies, universities and private organisations to expand the scope and impact of research outcomes.

According to the statement, the initiative received an overwhelming response, with 945 proposals submitted from academic and research institutions across India. Each selected centre will involve interdisciplinary teams drawn from at least 20 collaborating institutions, including IITs, NITs, central and state universities, private universities and recognised R&D organisations.

Officials said the programme reflects the growing importance of integrating scientific research with contextual social understanding to address regional and national development challenges. It is designed to align with the goals of the National Education Policy 2020 and the broader vision of Viksit Bharat 2047.

By combining advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics and big data analytics with insights from social sciences and humanities, the centres aim to create innovative solutions that support sustainable development and inclusive growth. The initiative is also expected to strengthen India's research ecosystem by encouraging collaboration, innovation and knowledge exchange across disciplines.

UN cuts India's 2026 GDP forecast to 6.4%

NEW DELHI

The United Nations has revised India's economic growth forecast for 2026 downward to 6.4 percent, while still ranking the country among the world's fastest-growing major economies.

The adjustment reflects heightened uncertainty in the global economic environment, including trade disruptions, geopolitical tensions and slower external demand.

According to the latest assessment, India remains resilient but is "not immune" to ongoing global headwinds, as noted by UN economist Ingo Pitterle. The report highlights that while domestic fundamentals continue to support growth, external risks are increasingly influencing medium-term projections.

The UN's updated outlook suggests a moderation from earlier estimates, primarily due to weaker global trade momentum, persistent inflationary pressures in several advanced economies and continued uncertainty linked to geopolitical conflicts. These factors are expected to weigh on export demand and investment flows in emerging markets, including India.

The revision reflects global headwinds, though India remains one of the world's fastest-growing major economies

Despite the downgrade, India's growth rate remains significantly higher than the global average, reinforcing its position as one of the key engines of global economic expansion. Strong domestic consumption, ongoing infrastructure development and sustained services-sector performance are expected to continue supporting economic activity.

The report also notes that emerging economies face a mixed outlook, with some benefiting from supply chain diversification while others remain vulnerable to external shocks. In India's case, the balance between robust internal demand and external volatility will be critical in determining actual growth outcomes.

Economists suggest that policy support, including continued investment in infrastructure and manufacturing, along with stable macroeconomic management, will be important in sustaining momentum.

Reasons for the slash

- India GDP forecast cut to 6.4%
- Global uncertainties driving growth slowdown concerns
- India still among fastest-growing economies globally
- Strong domestic demand supports economic resilience
- Trade and geopolitical risks weighing outlook

QUICK READ

Indian youth lead world in workplace AI confidence

New Delhi

A Deloitte survey found that young Indian professionals are more confident about using artificial intelligence at work than their global counterparts. Around 80 percent of Indian Gen Z employees and 77 percent of millennials believe generative AI will improve how they work within the next year. Many respondents said AI tools help increase productivity, reduce repetitive tasks, and support creativity. However, concerns about job security, misinformation, and ethical use of AI still remain among some workers. The survey highlighted the importance of training, responsible AI policies, and leadership support to help employees adapt to rapidly changing technologies while maintaining trust and long term career growth opportunities across diverse business sectors

India hosts 68th APO governing body session

New Delhi

India is hosting the 68th Session of the Asian Productivity Organisation Governing Body at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi from May 20 to 22. The event brings together over 60 senior delegates from 20 member economies of the Asia-Pacific region. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will attend the inaugural session. Key discussions will focus on the APO Vision 2030 framework, budget planning for 2027–28, institutional reforms, and election procedures for leadership roles. The meeting also includes awards for productivity advocates and technical experts. Officials said the event highlights India's commitment to productivity-led growth, innovation, and regional cooperation for sustainable economic development.

Despite the export slowdown, eco-friendly vehicles recorded strong growth

S. KOREA AUTO EXPORTS FALL 5.5% AMID MIDEAST CRISIS

SEOUL

South Korea's automobile exports declined 5.5% year-on-year in April, reaching $6.17 billion, as shipments to the Middle East dropped sharply due to the ongoing United States-Iran conflict.

Government data released Wednesday showed exports to the region plunged 38.7%, while shipments to Asia and the European Union also fell significantly.

Despite the export slowdown, eco-friendly vehicles recorded strong growth. Exports of electric, hydrogen and hybrid vehicles climbed 13.5 percent to $2.52 billion, driven by rising global demand for greener transportation. Electric and hydrogen vehicle exports rose 23.1 percent, while hybrid vehicle exports surged 40.2 percent.

Domestic automobile sales in South Korea edged up 0.7 percent to 152,000 units in April. Eco-friendly vehicles accounted for nearly 60 percent of all domestic sales, increasing 31 percent from a year earlier. Electric vehicle sales more than doubled, soaring 139.7% to 38,927 units, supported by higher oil prices linked to the Middle East conflict and new vehicle rotation policies.

U.S. electric vehicle maker Tesla posted an 811.5% surge in sales in South Korea, while Chinese automaker BYD recorded a 272.6% increase. However, overall automobile production in the country fell 6.1% due to supply chain disruptions and consumers delaying purchases ahead of new model launches.

Hyundai Motor and Renault Korea reported production declines, while Kia, GM Korea and KG Mobility achieved modest gains. The trade ministry said supply chain conditions are expected to stabilize beginning in June.

'INDIA'S TWO-WHEELER SECTOR MAY CLOCK 5% GROWTH IN FY27'

NEW DELHI

India's two-wheeler industry is projected to grow up to 5 percent year-on-year in FY2027, supported by tax reforms, improving replacement demand and rising rural consumption, according to a recent report by ICRA.

The report noted strong performance in April 2026, when wholesale volumes rose 29.2% to 1.9 million units after affordability improved following GST 2.0 reforms.

Retail demand also remained healthy, rising 13 percent year-on-year, supported by steady rural incomes, an extended wedding season and relatively stable pricing across key models.

However, the report warned that growth momentum may moderate due to a high base effect, weak monsoon expectations linked to El Niño conditions, fuel price pressures and rising input costs.

Electric two-wheelers continued to expand rapidly, with retail sales jumping 68.1 percent to 154,337 units in April, reflecting stronger consumer adoption and improving cost competitiveness.

Exports also remained a key growth driver, rising 38.3 percent in April and 23.3 percent over FY2026, supported by expanding global demand for Indian brands despite geopolitical uncertainties.

ICRA highlighted that ongoing tensions in West Asia could pose risks to supply chains and export performance, even as long-term demand fundamentals remain positive for the sector.

Analysts said the sector's medium-term outlook remains stable, driven by premiumisation trends, rising electric vehicle penetration and supportive financing conditions, though they cautioned that volatility in commodity prices and global supply chains could influence near-term margins.

According to ICRA, sustained infrastructure expansion, expanding rural mobility needs and continued investment by original equipment manufacturers are expected to support long-term growth. The electric two-wheeler segment is also likely to gain further traction as battery costs decline and charging networks improve across urban and semi-urban markets, strengthening affordability and adoption rates over the coming fiscal years.

India–norway green alliance advances climate co-op

NEW DELHI

Former Norwegian climate minister Erik Solheim has said the growing India–Norway green strategic partnership offers a practical roadmap for global climate cooperation. In an opinion piece, he noted that Norway's financial strength and technical expertise complement India's large-scale implementation capacity.

The partnership focuses on accelerating India's target of 500 gigawatts of non-fossil energy by 2030 and expanding green hydrogen development. Solheim highlighted collaboration in offshore wind, hydropower, maritime decarbonisation, and green shipping as key areas. He added that the alliance is not traditional aid but strategic alignment, aiming to scale sustainable technologies and reshape global trade and energy transition models effectively.

EU strikes provisional agreement to finalize US trade deal

BELGIUM

The European Union has crossed a major legislative hurdle that could pave the way for the final implementation of a landmark trade agreement with the United States.

EU lawmakers and member states reached a provisional agreement to eliminate import duties on several American goods, helping advance the long-delayed transatlantic trade pact.

The agreement is aimed at preventing a fresh escalation in trade tensions between the two economic powers. Former US President Donald Trump had earlier warned of imposing higher tariffs on European products, including automobiles, if the European Union failed to implement its commitments under the proposed deal by July 4.

Under the proposed arrangement, the EU would remove tariffs on most US industrial goods and provide preferential access for selected American agricultural and seafood products. In return, the United States would maintain a reduced 15 per cent tariff cap on most European exports, replacing the threat of steeper duties.

The trade deal, initially negotiated in 2025, is viewed as an important move to stabilise the nearly $2 trillion transatlantic economic relationship. European lawmakers also pushed for safeguards to protect EU industries in case Washington fails to honour its commitments. The agreement reportedly includes suspension mechanisms and sunset clauses that would allow the EU to restore tariffs if required.

The European Parliament is expected to hold a final vote on the legislation in the coming weeks. If approved, the deal could significantly boost trade cooperation, ease business uncertainty, and strengthen economic ties between the United States and the European Union amid rising global trade tensions.

'Bharat Tex app to boost AI-driven networking, business matchmaking'

NEW DELHI

The government has launched the Bharat Tex 2026 Event App to enhance AI-driven networking and business matchmaking at India's flagship global textile event, according to an official statement issued on Wednesday.

The app was launched by Neelam Shami Rao, Secretary of the Ministry of Textiles, and is designed to improve the experience of exhibitors, buyers, international delegates, speakers and visitors participating in the upcoming Bharat Tex 2026 event.

Developed as a digital companion, the platform allows users to access event schedules, discover exhibitors, book meetings, navigate the venue, and receive real-time updates through a single interface. It also supports lead generation and structured networking for business interactions.

A key feature of the app is its AI-powered smart assistant, which provides 24x7 conversational support for attendees. Users can ask queries in simple language and get instant responses on schedules, directions, and event-related information, making navigation easier for both domestic and international participants.

The app also includes QR-based contact exchange tools, allowing exhibitors to scan badges and store participant details for follow-up. Additional features include exhibitor search filters, interactive floor maps of Bharat Mandapam, and access to live sessions and agendas.

Organised by the Bharat Tex Trade Federation in collaboration with 11 export promotion councils and industry bodies, and supported by the Ministry of Textiles, the event follows the government's 5F vision—Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign.

Bharat Tex 2026 is scheduled to be held in New Delhi from July 14 to 17 and is expected to attract over 7,000 international buyers and more than 1.3 lakh trade visitors, showcasing India's textile value chain and export capabilities.

HISTORIC HIGHS

AI financing fuels record US convertible bond boom

NEW YORK

U.S. companies are issuing convertible bonds at a record pace as artificial intelligence–driven investment fuels demand for flexible financing, according to a recent report. Total issuance reached about $34 billion in the first four months of 2026, more than double the same period last year.

The surge is being led by AI-linked firms building large-scale infrastructure such as data centres, cloud platforms and power systems. Roughly half of this year's issuance is tied to AI-related spending, highlighting how the sector is reshaping corporate fundraising.

Major deals include large offerings from companies such as Oracle, Core Weave and IREN Limited, alongside activity from semiconductor and energy firms like NextEra Energy and On Semiconductor. Companies are also refinancing pandemic-era debt as earlier convertible bonds approach maturity.

Convertible bonds are gaining popularity in a high-interest-rate environment because they combine fixed-income features with the option to convert into equity if share prices rise. This structure allows firms to raise capital at lower coupon rates while giving investors upside exposure to stock performance.

Investor demand is being driven largely by hedge funds and asset managers seeking gains from equity volatility, particularly in AI and semiconductor stocks. However, analysts warn that the growing participation of higher-risk issuers could increase market vulnerability. Despite risks, strong equity performance and AI investment momentum have made convertibles an attractive funding route, with some companies raising capital even without immediate funding pressure, as borrowing conditions remain relatively favourable.

- AI firms drive convertible bond boom
- U.S. issuance hits record high levels
- Infrastructure spending fuels strong capital demand
- High rates make convertibles attractive option
- Investors seek equity upside amid volatility

How Indian Real Estate Holds Most Black Money in the Country?

India's real estate sector has long been considered the most favoured sanctuary for unaccounted wealth. While the country has made significant strides in digitising financial transactions, strengthening banking oversight, and expanding the income tax net, real estate remains the one sector where black money cash earned outside the formal economy and hidden from tax authorities finds its most comfortable and least traceable home. The numbers tell a striking story. India's shadow economy is estimated to be anywhere between 20% and 40% of its GDP, and real estate is consistently identified by economists, government bodies, and anti-corruption watchdogs as the single largest repository of this unaccounted wealth. Understanding why requires peeling back the layers of how property transactions work in India and more importantly, how they are routinely manipulated.

What Is Black Money and Why Does Real Estate Attract It?

Black money refers to income on which taxes have not been paid — either because it was earned through illegal means (corruption, drug trafficking, contract fraud) or because it was earned legitimately but deliberately kept off the books.

In India, the latter category is enormous. Cash-intensive businesses, unreported rental income, under-invoiced exports, and political funding form a river of unaccounted money that constantly seeks avenues to transform itself into legitimate assets.

REAL ESTATE IS THE IDEAL DESTINATION FOR SEVERAL REASONS

- **High transaction values:** A single property deal can absorb crores of rupees in cash, making it extraordinarily efficient as a vehicle for parking large sums.
- **Opaque pricing:** Unlike stocks or gold, property has no fixed market price. Two identical flats in the same building can legally be sold at different rates, giving both buyer and seller room to negotiate what gets officially declared and what stays off the record.
- **Low documentation requirements (historically):** While regulations have tightened in recent years, property purchases especially in semi-urban areas, agricultural land, and smaller cities have historically required minimal KYC (Know Your Customer) compliance compared to banking or securities transactions.
- **Tangible asset with long holding periods:** Real estate holds value over decades. Unlike cash that can be seized, or foreign accounts that can be traced, a property can sit quietly appreciating in value while generating legitimate rental income.

The Circle Rate Gap: How Under-Reporting Works

The most widespread and institutionalised mechanism for black money laundering in Indian real estate is the gap between the circle rate (also called the Ready Reckoner Rate or Jantri rate) and the actual market price.

The circle rate is the minimum value at which a property transaction can be officially registered, as determined by the state government. It is typically set below actual market rates sometimes significantly so. This gap is the playground for black money.

Here is how it works in practice: Suppose a flat in Delhi's Dwarka neighbourhood has a circle rate of ₹60 lakh but trades in the market at ₹1 crore. The buyer and seller agree to officially register the property at ₹60 lakh (the circle rate floor), paying stamp duty and taxes on that amount. The remaining ₹40 lakh is paid in cash untraceable, undocumented, and effectively laundered into a tangible asset.

The seller converts their unaccounted cash into a legal asset at a declared price. The buyer gets a bargain on taxes. The builder or developer, if involved, books only partial revenue. Everyone wins, except the government, which loses taxes, and the honest taxpayer.

This practice is so widespread that in many Indian cities, it is treated not as a crime but as a custom. Real estate agents openly factor the black component into negotiations. First-time buyers are casually counselled by brokers that 20–30% cash is normal here.

The Developer Ecosystem: Builders as Black Money Intermediaries

India's real estate developer ecosystem particularly in the mid-size and unorganised segment has historically functioned as a key node in the black money network.

The mechanism works at multiple levels:

Cash acceptance from buyers: Unscrupulous developers routinely accept a portion of the payment in cash. This cash then either recirculates into the construction process (paying labourers, buying unregistered materials) or is personally retained by the promoter.

Inflated construction costs: A developer might show construction costs of ₹2,000 per square foot on paper while actually spending ₹1,400. The ₹600 difference gets paid in cash to contractors, creating a slush fund that remains entirely off-balance-sheet.

Shell companies and benami ownership: Developers often hold land parcels or projects through a web of shell companies. This obscures ownership, delays tax liability, and makes it nearly impossible to trace where the original money came from.

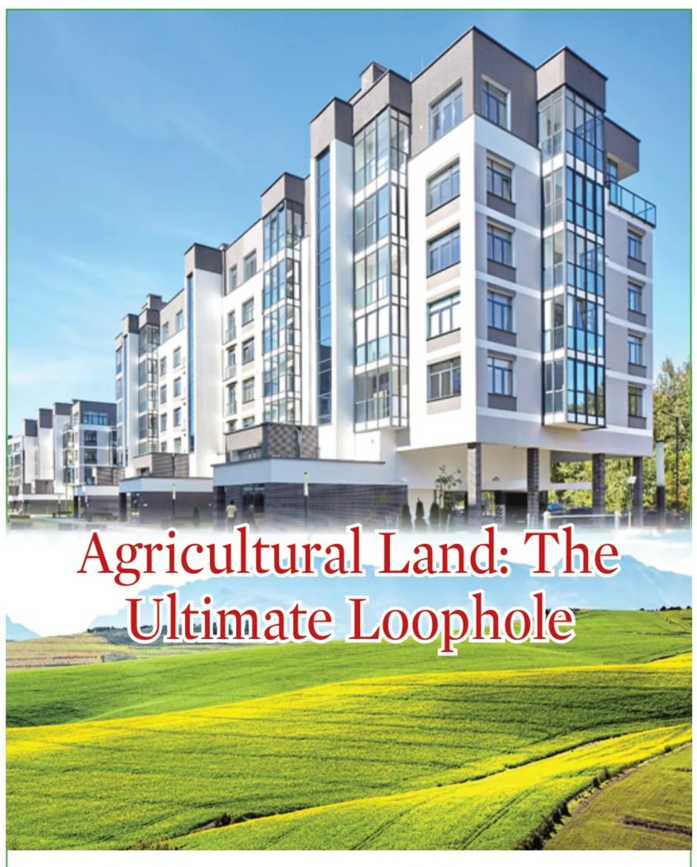
Pre-launch cash collections: Before a project receives formal regulatory approval, developers collect booking amounts in cash sometimes running into hundreds of crores which are never officially accounted for until (and sometimes even after) approvals arrive.

BENAMI TRANSACTIONS: HIDING WEALTH BEHIND OTHER PEOPLE'S NAMES

The word benami literally means without a name and it describes one of the most sophisticated tools for parking black money in real estate. A benami transaction is one where the actual purchaser pays for a property but registers it in someone else's name; a relative, domestic worker, driver, or even a fictitious individual.

By doing this, wealthy individuals can hold vast property portfolios without those assets ever appearing in their own name. Politicians, bureaucrats, and businesspeople with disproportionate assets have historically used benami property extensively to conceal wealth.

The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act of 2016 significantly strengthened the government's hand in this regard, allowing authorities to attach and confiscate benami properties. But enforcement remains patchy, and the sheer volume of suspect transactions accumulated over decades makes comprehensive action an enormous challenge.



Agricultural Land: The Ultimate Loophole

Agricultural land transactions in India occupy a particularly murky corner of real estate law. In most Indian states, agricultural land cannot be purchased by non-agriculturists but these restrictions are routinely circumvented through power-of-attorney arrangements, partial conversions, and outright fraud.

What makes agricultural land especially attractive for black money is the absence of capital gains tax on agricultural income. If land is sold after being classified (even nominally) as agricultural, the gains are exempt from tax. This exemption designed to protect farmers has been systematically exploited by wealthy individuals who classify urban fringe land as agricultural, sell it for enormous profits, and declare the entire gain as tax-free agricultural income.

The Income Tax Department has flagged this repeatedly as a major conduit for black money, but the political sensitivity around agricultural income taxation has prevented any decisive reform.

Rental Income: The Invisible Cash Flow

India's rental housing market is estimated to generate hundreds of thousands of crores in rental income annually. A very large share of this is collected entirely in cash and never reported to tax authorities.

Landlords from small apartment owners to large commercial property holders routinely collect rent in cash, particularly from tenants who are themselves cash-based businesses. This creates a permanent stream of untaxed income that accumulates quietly and is often then reinvested into more property, compounding the cycle.

The government's attempt to mandate TDS (Tax Deducted at Source) on rent above certain thresholds has had limited success, largely because enforcement relies on tenants acting as tax collectors — a role most are reluctant to assume for fear of landlord retaliation or simply because of the administrative burden involved.

Government Initiatives: Progress and Gaps

The Indian government has launched a series of measures over the past decade to address black money in real estate:

Demonetisation (2016): The overnight withdrawal of ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes was partly targeted at disrupting cash-heavy sectors like real estate. It caused short-term disruption but did not fundamentally alter the structural incentives for under-reporting.

RERA (Real Estate Regulation and Development Act, 2016): RERA brought mandatory registration of projects, escrow requirements for buyer funds, and delivery timelines. It has meaningfully improved transparency in the organised residential sector but has limited reach into the secondary market and smaller cities.

GST on Real Estate: The introduction of GST on under-construction properties (currently 5% for regular housing, 1% for affordable housing) reduced some avenues for input-cost manipulation, but the exemption of completed/resale properties from GST leaves a large portion of the market untouched.

PAN Requirements: Mandatory quoting of PAN for property transactions above ₹10 lakh has helped, but cash transactions structured below thresholds or routed through multiple smaller payments remain common.

Benami Property Notices: The Income Tax Department has issued tens of thousands of notices under the Benami Act and attached thousands of properties. But the volume of suspected benami holdings dwarfs enforcement capacity.

The fundamental gap remains: circle rates in many areas are still far below market rates, leaving the core mechanism of cash-component transactions largely intact.

Conclusion: A Problem Hiding in the Most Visible Asset Class

There is a deep irony at the heart of India's real estate–black money problem: it is the most visible form of wealth buildings, land, physical structures yet it remains the least effectively taxed and regulated. A Bollywood star's villa, a politician's farmhouse, a businessman's commercial complex all can sit in plain sight while harbouring entirely unaccounted wealth.

The problem is not primarily one of law. India has sufficient legal architecture to address black money in real estate. The problem is one of political will, enforcement bandwidth, and the deeply entrenched cultural normalisation of the cash component. Until the state treats the circle-rate gap as seriously as it treats offshore accounts and until property buyers refuse to participate in a system that inflates prices and crowds them out of the market real estate will continue to serve as the most reliable vault for India's shadow economy.

Cleaning up Indian real estate would not just be a tax enforcement win. It would be a foundational step toward making homeownership genuinely affordable for the hundreds of millions of Indians who currently find themselves priced out of a market where the prices are, in part, being driven by money that was never honestly earned.

Arsenal end 22-year wait to clinch historic Premier League title triumph

Mikel Arteta's side finally reclaim English football crown after years of near misses

LONDON

Arsenal F.C. were crowned Premier League champions for the first time in 22 years after defending champions Manchester City F.C. were held to a 1-1 draw by AFC Bournemouth.

The result confirmed Arsenal's first English top-flight title since the legendary "Invincibles" season of 2003-04 under former manager Arsene Wenger, when the club famously completed the league campaign unbeaten.

After finishing runners-up in each of the last three seasons, manager Mikel Arteta finally guided Arsenal back to the summit of English football, ending the club's six-year trophy drought and completing a remarkable transformation.

Arsenal had moved to the brink of the title with a hard-fought 1-0 victory over relegated Burnley F.C. on Monday, opening a five-point lead over Manchester City ahead of the latter's crucial away fixture at Bournemouth.

City needed victory at the Vitality Stadium to keep the title race alive until the final weekend, but Pep Guardiola's side failed to deliver despite a late equaliser from star striker Erling Haaland.

Bournemouth took the lead in the 39th minute through teenage French forward Eli Junior Kroupi, who curled a superb effort beyond goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma after being set up by Adrien Truffert.

Haaland eventually found the net deep into stoppage time after a rebound from Rodri's shot, but the final whistle arrived moments later, officially handing Arsenal the title.

Arsenal supporters erupted in celebration outside the Emirates Stadium as news of City's dropped points spread across London.

Arteta's side have impressed throughout the season with their attacking football and defensive discipline. The Gunners also set a new Premier League record for most goals scored from corners in a single campaign, with Kai Havertz's winner against Burnley becoming their 18th set-piece goal of the season. Arsenal could yet complete an unforgettable campaign, with the club now preparing to face Paris Saint-Germain F.C. in the UEFA Champions League final in Budapest on May 30.

Lifetime ban to Czech coach for secretly filming women footballers

BERLIN

UEFA has handed a lifetime ban to Czech women's football coach Petr Vlachovsky for secretly filming female players in changing rooms, following an ethics investigation into serious misconduct allegations.

In a statement issued, UEFA's Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body said Vlachovsky had been banned "from exercising any football-related activity for life" after the appointment of an Ethics and Disciplinary Inspector to examine the allegations against him.

Czech media had earlier reported that Vlachovsky was convicted in May 2025 and initially received a suspended one-year prison sentence along with a five-year domestic coaching ban. The case involved secretly recording players of FC Slovacko inside changing rooms, with the youngest victim reportedly aged 17.

UEFA also requested FIFA to extend the ban worldwide, effectively preventing Vlachovsky from engaging in any football-related role internationally. In addition, UEFA

UEFA says misconduct violated player safety, ethics and integrity standards across football globally

instructed the Football Association of the Czech Republic to revoke his coaching licence permanently. The European governing body described the punishment as necessary to uphold player safety, ethics and integrity standards within football.

FC Slovacko did not immediately respond to media requests seeking comment on the matter.

The FIFPRO, the global footballers' union, welcomed UEFA's decision and praised the organisation for taking strict action against misconduct in women's football.

"This outcome sends a strong and necessary message that abusive and inappropriate behaviour has no place in football and that safeguarding the wellbeing of players must remain a priority at every level of the game," FIFPRO said in a statement.

Vlachovsky had previously also served as coach of the Czech Republic women's Under-19 team, making the case particularly significant within the country's women's football structure. The incident has once again highlighted growing concerns around safeguarding measures and player protection in professional sports environments, especially in women's football.

UEFA's move is being viewed as one of the strongest disciplinary punishments imposed by the organisation in recent years involving misconduct by a coach. The governing body has increasingly emphasised player welfare, safety and ethical conduct as central priorities in its disciplinary framework.

The matter is expected to remain under FIFA's review regarding the extension of the ban at the international level.

Neymar included in Brazil's WC squad despite lingering fitness concerns

RIO DE JANEIRO

Neymar has been named in Brazil's squad for the 2026 FIFA World Cup despite continuing concerns surrounding his fitness and form following a long recovery from a serious knee injury.

The 34-year-old striker, Brazil's all-time leading scorer with 79 international goals, will now prepare for his fourth World Cup appearance after being selected by Brazil coach Carlo Ancelotti.

Neymar has struggled to regain peak condition since suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in October 2023. Since returning to Brazilian club Santos FC, he has played only eight matches this year, scoring four goals and providing two assists.

Despite doubts from analysts and former footballers over whether he would make the final squad, Ancelotti expressed confidence in Neymar's recovery and experience.

"He has improved his fitness and he will be an important player in this World Cup," Ancelotti said during the squad announcement in Rio de Janeiro.

The former Real Madrid C.F. manager added that experienced players were crucial for a tournament of this magnitude and backed Neymar to continue improving physically before Brazil's opening match.

"He can still improve his fitness until the first match of the World Cup," Ancelotti said. "He has experience in this competition, the love of the group and he can help create a better environment within the squad."

Shortly before the official announcement, Neymar hinted at his inclusion by updating his Instagram biography to include Brazil alongside Santos.

Brazil's 26-member squad also includes attacking stars Vinicius Junior and Raphinha, who are expected to play leading roles during the tournament in North America.

Ancelotti, who took charge of Brazil in May 2025, had not selected Neymar previously during his tenure. The Italian coach recently extended his contract with the Brazilian Football Confederation through the 2030 World Cup despite facing criticism over inconsistent performances and injuries affecting key players.

Brazil will begin their World Cup campaign against Morocco national football team in New Jersey on June 13 before facing Haiti national football team and Scotland national football team in Group C. Ancelotti will also be without injured forwards Rodrygo and Estevao, both considered major absentees from the squad.

Veteran forward earns fourth World Cup opportunity after recovering from serious knee injury recently

FIFA World Cup 2026: U.S. launches fast-track visa system for travelling football fans

WASHINGTON

International football fans planning to attend the FIFA World Cup 2026 in the United States have been advised to begin their travel documentation process early, with American authorities introducing a special fast-track visa appointment system for ticket holders.

The tournament, scheduled across multiple cities in the United States, Canada and Mexico, is expected to attract millions of travelling supporters from around the world.

According to the United States Department of State, most foreign nationals travelling to the United States for the World Cup will require a B1/B2 visitor visa unless they belong to countries covered under the Visa Waiver Program.

Officials stressed that fans should secure valid travel documents well in advance to avoid delays closer to the tournament.

To simplify the process for football supporters, authorities have introduced the FIFA Priority Appointment Scheduling System, commonly called FIFA PASS. The system allows fans who purchase official World Cup tickets directly from FIFA and opt into the programme to access priority interview appointments for B1/B2 visas before the tournament begins.

The standard visa application process requires travellers to complete the DS-160 non-immigrant visa application form, pay the visa processing fee and attend an interview at the relevant U.S. consulate or embassy. The exact procedures may vary depending on the applicant's country of residence.

Authorities also reminded travellers that passports must generally remain valid for at least six months beyond the intended period of stay in the United States, though certain nationality-based exemptions may apply.

Fans from countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program have an alternative travel option through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). Under this programme, eligible travellers can visit the United States for tourism or business purposes for up to 90 days without obtaining a visa.

However, ESTA approval remains mandatory before travel for all eligible visitors under the waiver programme.

Citizens of Canada and Bermuda do not require separate visas or additional travel authorisation to enter the United States for the tournament, provided they satisfy standard entry conditions.

The World Cup final is scheduled to be held at MetLife Stadium, while matches will take place across several host cities in North America.

U.S. authorities have urged fans to regularly monitor official immigration and tournament updates while planning their travel arrangements for the global football spectacle.

Hockey India calls meet over harassment complaints

CHENNAI

Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey has called an emergency executive board meeting after multiple sexual harassment and misconduct complaints surfaced in recent months. The discussions are expected to focus on stricter disciplinary action, strengthening POSH safeguards and restoring confidence among players, officials and stakeholders in Indian hockey.

Alcaraz withdraws from Wimbledon due to wrist injury

LONDON

Carlos Alcaraz has withdrawn from this year's Wimbledon Championships due to a lingering wrist injury, dealing a major blow to the tournament and the tennis world ahead of the grass-court Grand Slam next month. The two-time Wimbledon champion announced that he would not be fit in time to compete at the prestigious event in London as he continues recovering from the injury sustained during the Barcelona Open last month.

The wrist problem had already forced the Spanish star to miss the upcoming French Open, which begins later this week in Paris. His latest decision means Alcaraz will now miss back-to-back Grand Slam tournaments during a crucial phase of the season.

Alcaraz injured his wrist while competing at the Barcelona Open and has since been undergoing rehabilitation and medical assessment. Although there had initially been hopes of a return in time for Wimbledon, the 23-year-old decided against risking further damage by returning prematurely.

The absence of one of the sport's biggest stars is expected to significantly impact the tournament, where Alcaraz had established himself as one of the dominant players on grass in recent years. Earlier this season, Alcaraz created history by winning the Australian Open title, becoming the youngest male player ever to complete a career Grand Slam by capturing all four major titles. His aggressive baseline play, athleticism and composure under pressure have made him one of the leading faces of modern tennis and a major attraction for fans worldwide.

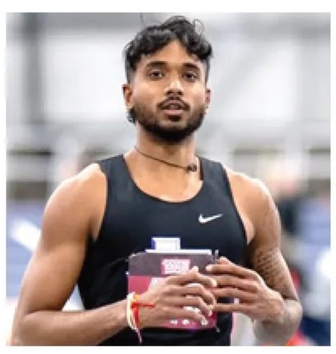
Tournament organisers are yet to comment officially on his withdrawal, but his absence leaves the men's draw more open heading into Wimbledon. Tennis analysts believe Alcaraz and his team are prioritising long-term fitness over short-term participation, especially given the demanding schedule ahead and the importance of avoiding recurring wrist complications.

Lokesh Sathyanathan returns to India targeting Commonwealth Games and Asian Games medals

BENGALURU

Indian long jumper Lokesh Sathyanathan has returned to the country with his focus firmly set on qualifying for and winning medals at the upcoming Commonwealth Games and Asian Games later this year.

The Bengaluru-born athlete, who currently competes in the United States collegiate circuit for Tarleton State University, has been granted special exemption by the Athletics Federation of India to participate in the final Commonwealth Games selection trials in Ranchi beginning May 22.



Lokesh had been unable to satisfy the federation's eligibility requirement of competing in at least two domestic national-level meets and one state competition due to his academic examinations in the United States. However, considering the circumstances and his recent performances, AFI allowed him to take part in the trials.

The 26-year-old athlete has emerged as one of India's brightest long jump prospects this season after clinching the NCAA Division I Indoor Track and Field Championship title in March with a personal best leap of 8.21 metres.

He matched the same distance at a World Athletics-ratified meet in Texas last month. Although the effort is yet to receive formal recognition from AFI, it remains the best jump recorded by an Indian senior long jumper this season.

His mark also places him ahead of national star Murali Sreeshankar, who registered a season-best effort of 8.15 metres in Bengaluru earlier this year.

Lokesh's personal best currently ranks among the top six performances across Asian and Commonwealth nations, significantly boosting his medal prospects for the two major international events.

The athlete, whose father is a retired footballer and now works as a taxi driver, said he was determined to make the most of the opportunity after years of hard work and steady progress.

Kumble backs Sooryavanshi to break Gayle's sixes record

NEW DELHI

Former India captain Anil Kumble believes teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi has the potential to surpass Chris Gayle's long-standing record for the most sixes in a single Indian Premier League season.

The 15-year-old Rajasthan Royals opener continued his extraordinary form in IPL 2026 with another explosive knock as Rajasthan Royals defeated Lucknow Super Giants by seven wickets on Tuesday to stay alive in the playoff race.

Sooryavanshi has already smashed 53 sixes this season and now stands just six short of Gayle's record of 59 maximums in one IPL edition. With Rajasthan Royals still having one league game remaining and a possible playoff berth ahead, Kumble feels the youngster is well placed to create history.

"He has already hit 53 sixes this IPL season. Chris Gayle holds the record for most sixes in a season with 59. Rajasthan Royals have one more league game and then the playoffs. If they win, he will get more chances. I can see Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breaking Gayle's record and making history," Kumble said on Star Sports.

Kumble praised the youngster's remarkable range of strokeplay, particularly his ability to clear the boundary with ease over the cover region — a shot very few batters consistently execute in T20 cricket.

"Very few batters can hit sixes over cover with such ease. But Sooryavanshi did it multiple times against Digvesh Rathi. This kid is very special," he said.

The former India coach also highlighted Sooryavanshi's maturity and calm approach despite the growing attention surrounding him. According to Kumble, the youngster's grounded mindset suggests he is focused on building a long-term career rather than getting carried away by early success.

Kumble further credited fellow opener Yashasvi Jaiswal for easing the pressure during the high-scoring chase. Jaiswal's quick start allowed Sooryavanshi to settle before unleashing his aggressive strokeplay and dismantling the Lucknow bowling attack with ease.

Teen opener's fearless batting continues to rewrite IPL records and expectations this season

Pant apologises for expletive after RR defeat

JAIPUR

Rishabh Pant found himself at the centre of controversy after using an expletive during a live post-match television interview following Lucknow Super Giants's defeat to Rajasthan Royals in IPL 2026.

The incident came after Rajasthan Royals successfully chased down a massive target of 221 with five balls remaining at Jaipur. Teen batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi stole the show with a blistering 93 off just 38 deliveries to help Rajasthan remain alive in the playoff race and reclaim the Orange Cap.

Speaking during the post-match presentation, Pant attempted to defend his struggling side despite Lucknow suffering their ninth defeat of the season. However, while praising his team's quality, the wicketkeeper-batter accidentally used the "F-word" on live television.

"We are proud of the team, regardless of how the situation is. Regardless of the table, we are confident of the team," Pant said. "It hasn't gone our way, and everyone knows that. But that doesn't take away the fact that we are a f***ing good team."

The remark immediately went viral on social media platforms. Commentator Ian Bishop quickly intervened and apologised to viewers for the inappropriate language before the interview ended shortly afterwards.

Pant later reflected on the match itself, admitting Lucknow could have added another 10 runs after a strong start from Mitchell Marsh and Josh Inglis during the powerplay.

He also credited Jofra Archer for his disciplined death bowling, which restricted Lucknow's scoring in the final overs.

The 28-year-old acknowledged the difficulties bowlers face on flat batting tracks and said constant instructions often create confusion during pressure situations.

LSG skipper defends team despite crushing defeat and mounting pressure this IPL season

Pant further admitted the team missed the experience of senior pacer Mohammed Shami, who was unavailable for the match. He also explained that spinner Shahbaz Ahmed was held back strategically because Rajasthan's left-handers were well settled during the chase.

Former India captain reflects on burnout, gratitude, mental health and cricketing ambitions during summit

Kohli credits Dravid, Rathour for helping him rediscover joy in cricket

BENGALURU

Former India captain Virat Kohli has opened up about the emotional and mental exhaustion he experienced towards the end of his captaincy tenure, while expressing heartfelt gratitude to former head coach Rahul Dravid and batting coach Vikram Rathour for supporting him during a difficult phase in his career.

Kohli reflected on the enormous pressure he carried as both India's batting mainstay and leader across formats.

"I became the focal point of our batting and leadership. I didn't realise how much load both those took," Kohli said. "I was completely consumed by it. By the time I left captaincy, there was nothing left in the tank."

Kohli stepped down as Test captain after India's 2-1 series defeat in South Africa in 2022. The period also coincided with one of the leanest patches of his career, as he averaged just 26.50 in Test cricket that year. However, he made a strong comeback in 2023, averaging 55.91 with two centuries in 12 innings.

The 37-year-old said the support and understanding shown by Dravid and Rathour played a key role in helping him regain confidence and motivation.

"Whenever I meet Rahul bhai and Vikram Rathour, I thank them from the bottom of my heart. They really took care of me in a way that made me feel I wanted to play for them and perform for them," Kohli said.

Kohli also urged young cricketers not to get carried away by the glamour and financial rewards of the IPL alone, stressing that long-term respect in world cricket comes through commitment to formats like Test cricket.

"A lot of people relate drive to money. It is a factor, but not the only factor," he said. "You have to decide whether you want short-term comfort or a career lasting 15 to 20 years with recognition and respect." Kohli further emphasised the importance of mentally disconnecting from cricket occasionally to manage pressure and maintain emotional balance throughout a demanding career.

Kohli tops IPL rich list, KKR lead franchise values

MUMBAI

Virat Kohli has emerged as the highest grossing player in the history of the Indian Premier League, earning an estimated Rs 230 crore through his long association with Royal Challengers Bengaluru, according to a report released by Fanatic Sports and Hurun.

The report also revealed that the combined valuation of all 10 IPL franchises has reached an impressive Rs 1.63 lakh crore, highlighting the league's transformation into one of the world's biggest sporting properties.

Kolkata Knight Riders, co-owned by Shah Rukh Khan, emerged as the most valuable IPL franchise with a valuation exceeding Rs 19,200 crore. Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings followed closely with valuations of around Rs 18,400 crore each. The report projected even greater growth ahead, estimating that the average valuation of an IPL team could rise from the current USD 1.8 billion to nearly USD 15 billion by 2032 amid growing investor interest and expanding global influence. Hurun India Founder and Chief Researcher Anas Rahman Junaid said India's sports ecosystem is entering a major growth phase driven by grassroots talent development and increasing consumer spending power.

Kohli's long-time teammate and India captain Rohit Sharma ranks second in all-time IPL earnings with Rs 227.2 crore, while former India captain MS Dhoni stands third with Rs 200 crore.

The report also highlighted the significant earnings gap between men's and women's cricket. Smriti Mandhana leads the Women's Premier League earnings chart with cumulative earnings of Rs 13.7 crore, while the top 10 women players together have earned Rs 90 crore so far. In hockey, India captain Harmanpreet Singh is the highest-paid player in the Hockey India League with a salary of Rs 78 lakh, underlining the vast commercial gap between cricket and other Indian sports leagues.

IPL franchises witness massive valuation growth as cricket's financial ecosystem rapidly expands globally

Parag urges commentators to focus on cricket, not personal attacks on players

JAIPUR

Riyan Parag has urged television commentators and cricket experts to avoid personal criticism of players and instead focus on the game itself, saying cricketers deserve greater understanding and respect for the effort they put in behind the scenes.

The Rajasthan Royals skipper made the remarks after Rajasthan's seven-wicket victory over Lucknow Super Giants in Jaipur. Parag, who missed the match because of a hamstring injury, expressed frustration over constant scrutiny surrounding players, including criticism over his off-field conduct earlier this season.

"As far as IPL is concerned, there are a lot of things happening outside this year," Parag told reporters. "Players are working very hard. We try to give our best every time we step onto the field."

The 24-year-old said fans and commentators often overlook the preparation and hard work behind every match, especially when teams fail to deliver expected results.

"It is very easy to say after a team gets all out for 75 or

80 that they don't know how to play," he said. "But before every game, there are three or four days of preparation thinking about how to score 200 or 250. Sometimes things just don't happen."

Parag appealed specifically to commentators, saying their opinions strongly influence public perception and should remain centred on cricket rather than personal matters.

"We are humans too and we make mistakes too. Especially the commentators — their voices are reaching out to the people. I would request them to love cricket and talk about cricket," he added.

Parag also said he has learned over the years not to let outside criticism affect his game or mindset.

Bangladesh complete historic 2-0 Test series sweep over Pakistan

SYLHET

Bangladesh national cricket team scripted history by completing a remarkable 2-0 Test series whitewash over Pakistan national cricket team with a commanding 78-run victory in the second Test at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

The triumph marked Bangladesh's first-ever clean sweep against Pakistan in a home Test series and their second consecutive 2-0 series win over their Asian rivals after their historic success in Pakistan in 2024.

Chasing a challenging fourth-innings target of 437, Pakistan fought hard on the final day before eventually being bowled out for 358. Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam produced a match-winning spell, claiming 6 for 120 in 34.2 overs to dismantle Pakistan's batting lineup and seal a memorable win for the hosts.

After opting to bowl first, Pakistan initially restricted Bangladesh to 278 in the first innings despite a brilliant counter-attacking century

from wicketkeeper-batter Litton Das, who scored 126.

Pakistan, however, failed to capitalise and were bowled out for 232 in reply. Former captain Babar Azam top-scored with a quick 68, while Taijul and fast bowler Nahid Rana claimed three wickets each to hand Bangladesh a crucial 46-run first-innings lead.

Bangladesh then tightened their grip on the match with a dominant batting display in the second innings, posting 390 runs. Veteran batter Mushfiqur Rahim anchored the innings superbly with 137 off 233 deliveries, while Litton Das continued his fine form with a fluent 69.

Pakistan's chase saw fighting knocks from captain Shan Masood, who made 71, and wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan, who scored 94. Agha also contributed during a key middle-order partnership that briefly revived Pakistan's hopes.

However, Bangladesh's spinners dominated the decisive moments as Taijul removed both Masood and Babar before cleaning up the lower order.

Led by captain Najmul Hossain Shanto, Bangladesh once again demonstrated their growing strength in Test cricket with another landmark series triumph over Pakistan.

Gavaskar faces backlash for remarks on Akash Singh's 'chit' celebration

JAIPUR

Former India captain and veteran commentator Sunil Gavaskar has come under criticism on social media following his on-air remarks targeting Akash Singh during the IPL 2026 clash between Lucknow Super Giants and Rajasthan Royals.

The controversy erupted after Akash endured a difficult outing against Rajasthan Royals, conceding 54 runs in three overs as teenage sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi launched a brutal assault during Rajasthan's successful chase of 221.

While commentating on the match, Gavaskar referred to Akash's earlier wicket celebration against Chennai Super Kings, where the pacer had pulled out a handwritten note from his pocket after dismissing key batters. The note reportedly read, "Akki on fire – Akash knows how to take wickets in T20 game."

Akash had performed the celebration after dismissing players including Sanju Samson, Ruturaj Gaikwad and Urvil Patel in an earlier match.

During Tuesday's game, Gavaskar questioned the celebration while criticising the bowler's expensive spell.

"Where's the chit now? It's in the pocket, right? I like a bit of humility," Gavaskar remarked on air. "In one over, you may get a wicket in one ball, but the other five balls you are getting clobbered."

The former opener further added that such celebrations should be backed by consistent performances and suggested players should avoid excessive self-promotion.

However, Gavaskar's comments quickly sparked strong reactions online, with many fans accusing the commentator of being unnecessarily harsh on a young cricketer going through a difficult game. Several users defended Akash's celebration, saying expressive moments and confidence are now part of modern T20 cricket culture.Others argued that public criticism from senior commentators could negatively affect young players still trying to establish themselves at the highest level.

Despite the backlash, Gavaskar's remarks have reignited wider debates around player celebrations, sportsmanship and the balance between confidence and humility in contemporary cricket.

City Hilights (English Daily) published by P. Sunil Kumar (Publisher) on behalf of Immaculate Broadcasting Consortium World News (P) Ltd., No. 18, JRV Court, Queens's Road, Bengaluru – 560001 and printed at Vihaan Media #85/J, Industrial suburb 2nd stage, Yeshwantpur Extension,Bangalore-560022, Printed at No-7/2 plot no.CA-3/1,28(p)&29(p) Kapanoor 2nd Stage Industrial Area Kapnoor Village Kalaburagi -585104. Printed at S. J. R. V. Printers, No. 208 Plot No. B-019 KSSIDC Industrial Area, Irfan Ahamed Khan Pathan, 4th Main Road Gamanagatti, Hubballi-Dharwad – 580025. and Elegant Offset Printers Pvt. Ltd. No. 5-61/1, Shed No. M-6, Yeyyadi Industrial Estate, Yeyyadi, Mangalore - 575 008. (RNI No: KARENG / 2015 / 63243), Regd. No. BGGPO-2581/2017-2019 Posted at Bengaluru PSO-560026 Email - cityhilights.news@gmail.com Phone: 080-41209042. Copyright. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is prohibited.